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The Saturday Review of Literature

EDITED BY HENRY SEIDEL CANBY

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Take Heart, Provincials!

NEW YORK CITY houses the chief publishing firms in the United States, and the principal periodicals, with a few exceptions. The vast business of producing the country's literature is concentrated here as in no other city in America. Bookstores are all about us, the news of the world is digested for us daily, and weekly, and monthly, in a hundred easily procurable forms, within the grasp of the least fortunate. There is a network of branch libraries. Even a person of modest means can keep abreast of the most important books, of the most important news. Yet though the average metropolitan reader has such a multiplicity of advantages, in the satisfaction of his desire to read, over his brethren more widely scattered throughout the country, it is extremely doubtful whether he is better educated.

The New Yorker, to be sure, often prides himself upon being better informed concerning the literature of the world and the news of the world. He may read more books, more magazines, more newspapers. It would be curious if he did not; a more plentiful supply is to his hand than elsewhere. But quantity reading, as we may term it in the loose language of our time, does not signify very much. The New Yorker is acquainted with a great many ephemeral names and reputations in contemporary letters and with a great many minor garish events of little importance which, perhaps, do not come within the ken of the provincial reader. And yet, quite possibly the provincial reader may have a far sounder perspective on literature and life. We think this is often the case.

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The provincial's eyes are not so distracted by publishers' advertisements, by the counters of myriad bookstores. Periodicals like the one in which this appears enable him through reviews to pick and choose at leisure. Owing to the remarkable development of book distribution in these states the few really important books of a season are easy for him to get. And what is most important he can give more time to their perusal.

For the metropolitan is not only distracted by many books, the great city constantly amuses itself, and for his moments of relaxation offers a medley of diversions that directly conflict with reading and the pursuit of information. The metropolitan's acquaintance is often large, the telephone involves him in a network of social engagements. New York is a feverish work-and-play city, and the play part is often a singular waste of time, for all its glitter. Even the meeting of notables at the sundry teas and receptions and cocktail parties is but to grasp the hand of some literary lion and to say a few hasty words before one is again swallowed up in the vortex of other visitors. A great deal of it simply comes under the head of idle amusement.

Those aloof from a metropolis may retain a little of that greatest of all commodities from whose lack the life of a great city sickens today, namely, a proper leisure. If these yearn for what we might style the fleshpots of literature, to find themselves sucked into the whirlpool of discussion of books and of first-hand literary acquaintances, they may comfort themselves with the assurance that, far as they may be from what they regard as "the centre of things," they will, after all, find the best expression of any writer or of any critic upon the printed page, they will find the most interesting discussion between periodical or book covers. And if they are a week or a month, or even six months, behind the early birds in sampling the most succulent literary worm of the season, what of it? They have the advantage of weighing one critical opinion against another and of forming their own opinion in their own good time.

Hardly a day goes by when the wail does not come from some metropolitan writer, critic, or

(*Continued on page* 858)

Light

By LOUISE TOWNSEND NICHOLL

NO calendar or counted days
Need tell the time of year;
While light keeps its accustomed ways
The month must appear.

Leave only light, the lovely light,
The daylights as they fall
With sudden difference strong and slight
Upon a brick wall,

Where your eyes will idly go,
Unlit, preoccupied—
And find a light you used to know
Returning like the tide.

There its thin and yellow gold
Does February fling,
A medal cast in antique mold
Faintly stamped with Spring.

There I see September now,
Taken unaware
By splendor of a god's brow
Too radiant to bear.

And if there were no known name—
January, June—
The light on walls would lie the same
In the afternoon,

Familiar, startling, and profound,
Recurring unabated,
A presence resonant as sound,
Indubitably dated.

This Week

"The Singing Crow." Reviewed by *Louis Untermeyer.*
"The Almost Perfect State." Reviewed by *Ellwood Hendrick.*
"Prejudices." Reviewed by *Hazleton Spencer.*
"Five Weeks." Reviewed by *Charles Seymour.*
"Cortés, the Conqueror." Reviewed by *Carleton Beals.*
"Marching On." Reviewed by *James Southall Wilson.*
"The Arrow." Reviewed by *Sidney Howard.*

Next Week, or Later

Invocation. By *Stephen V. Benét.*

Economic Activity*

By WESLEY C. MITCHELL

WITHIN the hundred years since Simonde di Sismondi wrote about the uncertainties of catering to a "metaphysical public," the problem of keeping the rate at which each kind of goods is produced adjusted to the rate at which each kind is bought has been growing ever more intricate. Factory production has taken over one household industry after another, market areas have widened, the variety of products has multiplied, industrial equipment has become more elaborate and more specialized. On one side of the market stand the millions of money-income receivers, who provide for most of their families' wants by buying goods which others make. On the other side stand these same millions with their diversified capabilities as workers, their diversified properties in natural resources and industrial equipment, and their fluid investment funds, seeking the most profitable markets for all these productive energies. The buyers of goods and the sellers of goods are the same persons; but this identity does not enable them to keep their efforts as producers, organized in business enterprises, adjusted to their wants as consumers, organized in families.

* * *

The most active rôle in determining what use shall be made of the country's natural resources, industrial equipment, investment funds, brains, and brawn is played by business men.

When the earliest theories of crises were being formulated, economists could assume that there stood at the head of the typical business enterprise a capitalist employer, who provided a large part of the invested funds, carried the brunt of the hazard, performed the "work of superintendence," and pocketed the profits. Millions of enterprisers of this versatile type are still in business; but they are most numerous in industries where the scale of organization has remained what it was in the days of Sismondi and Ricardo. These are industries in which the business-cycle hazard is small. In the industries dominated by large-scale organization, the single capitalist-employer has been replaced by a "management," which includes the more active directors and high officials, often with the addition of one or two financial advisers, legal counsel, and large stockholders. It is this group which decides what the corporation shall do.

* * *

The "labor of superintendence" which men like Richard Arkwright and Robert Owen undertook in the early nineteenth century involved oversight of industrial, as well as commercial and financial, plans and operations. But under the impetus of scientific discoveries and mechanical inventions, the technique of industrial processes rapidly became so elaborate that this combination of functions ceased to be feasible. A few, very few, men possessed the versatility and the energy to keep abreast both of the increasingly exacting business problems and of the increasingly exacting industrial problems. Almost with the start of the Industrial Revolution, there began a division of labor between the men skilled in designing and operating machinery, and the men skilled in dealing with the markets for wares and

*This essay is to constitute a chapter in Mr. Mitchell's "Business Cycles: The Problem and Its Setting," to be published by the National Bureau of Economic Research in June.

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money. While the old capitalist-employer has evolved on the one side into a business management, he has evolved on the other side into a set of technical experts.

Although the technical experts who build upon the natural sciences know most about the making of goods and the technical experts who build upon the social sciences are coming to know most about the managing of men, they remain merely advisers to the captains of industry. Higher authority belongs to the business men. That is an inevitable result of economic organization on the basis of money economy in its present form. For the crucial factor in deciding the fate of a business enterprise is not the perfection of its mechanical processes, the excellence of its personnel work, or even the cleverness of its selling methods. All such excellencies contribute toward business success, and it is on this ground that the technical professions get their chance to share in the guidance of economic activity. But the final test is the ability of an enterprise as a whole to make profits. This fact entrenches the business men in their position as the authoritative leaders of the industrial army.

* * *

Business managements, however, must often submit their decisions to review by a higher court. Most enterprises need to borrow, and this fact gives the lenders an effective veto power over proposals which do not meet their approval.

The review of the projects of enterprises by lenders is no perfunctory affair. Nor is its practical influence upon the guidance of economic activity slight. There are always being launched more schemes than can be financed with the available funds. In rejecting some and accepting other schemes, the men of money are taking an important, though not a conspicuous, part in determining how labor shall be employed, what products shall be made, and what localities shall be built up.

The court of last resort in deciding what goods shall be made is the whole body of consumers with money incomes to spend.

Since retail merchants, public utilities, personal-service agencies, and professional men strive to supply what the public will buy, this rule applies immediately to the production of goods which gratify personal wants. Less strictly, the rule applies also to the production of the materials from which consumers' goods are made, to the production of all producers' goods used in making consumers' goods, and even to the production of producers' goods used in making producers' goods. But the farther the remove from personal wants, the less is the control of consumers over demand and the larger the element of business discretion. Business managements and their technical advisers have considerable leeway in choosing what locations, what materials, what equipment and what services they shall use in production, and in what proportions they shall combine the several factors. Nor is the timing of business purchases rigidly bound by the timing of consumers' purchases. Thus the accurate form of statement is: production is guided by forecasts of what consumers will buy, supplemented by judgments concerning profitable methods of providing both consumers' goods and the endless variety of producers' goods which modern technique requires.

* * *

Even within the range where their control is most direct, consumers exert their authority as guides of production in a passive fashion. Usually they reveal what they want made only by buying briskly certain of the finished goods offered them, and by buying other goods slowly. Producers follow the leads thus given as closely as they can, but also endeavor to stimulate demand and to direct it into profitable channels. Indeed, it seems that consumers often learn what they want by looking over the wares displayed in the shops. People are conscious of the general character of their needs, rather than of the specific goods which they desire. To decide precisely what foods, garments, furnishings, ornaments, or amusements one will buy is a difficult task. The picture given by so many economic treatises of buyers coming to market with their minds already made up about what goods they wish, and what price they are willing to pay at need for successive units of each kind, is an undeserved compliment to the mental energy of mankind. Even to canvass the market's offerings thoroughly, takes more time and thought than the average shopper will devote to the task. So people follow an easier course, buying what they have bought before, what they see others using, or what advertisements and salesmen urge them to buy. The psychological categories important to the understanding of consumers' demand are habit, imitation, and suggestion—not reflective choice. In particular, new products are seldom called for by consumers conscious of ungratified wants; they are pushed upon consumers by business enterprises, which often spend large sums in "educating the market," or "creating demand."

One reason why spending money is a backward art in comparison with making money is that the family continues to be the dominant unit of organization for spending money, whereas for making money the family has been superseded largely by a more highly organized unit. The housewife, who does a large fraction of the world's shopping, is not selected for her efficiency as a manager, is not dismissed for inefficiency, and has small chance of extending her sway over other households if she proves capable. She must buy so many different kinds of goods that she cannot become a good judge of qualities and prices, like the buyers for business houses. She is usually a manual laborer in several crafts, as well as a manager—a combination of functions not conducive to efficiency. From the sciences of most importance to consumption, physiology and psychology, she cannot get as much practical help as the business man can get from the more mature sciences of physics and chemistry. Above all, she cannot systematize all her planning on the basis of accounting like the business man; for while the dollar is a satisfactory unit for reckoning profits as well as costs, it is not a satisfactory unit for expressing family welfare. Under these conditions, it is not surprising that what the world has learned in the art of consumption has been due less to the initiative of consumers, than to the initiative of producers striving to win a market for their wares.

Yet with all their puzzles, consumers are in a strong market position. Their formal freedom to spend their money incomes as they like, combined with their massive inertia, keeps producers under pressure to solicit custom, to teach the public to want more goods and new goods. This task of stimulating demand is never done; for the march of technical improvement is ever increasing our capacity to produce, and before we have learned to distribute and to use what has just been added to our output, new advances have been scored.

* * *

With technical experts to plan the processes of production, business experts to guide the making of money, lenders to review all projects requiring large investments, government to care for the public welfare, and with the whole buying public as final arbiter, it may seem as if the business economy provides a staff and a procedure adequate to the task of directing economic activity, vast and intricate as that task is.

This impression is strengthened by observing that each class of guides is spurred to efficiency by hope of gain, and deterred from recklessness by fear of loss. The engineer who blunders is discharged, the enterpriser who blunders goes into bankruptcy, the lender who blunders loses his money. Thus the guides who misdirect the industrial army are always being eliminated from the number of those who lead. On the other hand, those who succeed are always being promoted to posts of wider power.

Nor does all this apply merely to the leaders of economic activity. In theory, every adult is free to choose whatever lawful ways of making a money income he thinks wise, and to change as often as he likes. Thus every worker has a modest share in directing production. In practice, of course, the range of occupations for which anyone can qualify is limited both by his native capacity and by his opportunities to get the requisite training and social connection. But the pressure which the business economy applies to the rank and file of the industrial army to develop efficiency in working and spending money is certainly not less severe than the pressure it applies to the captains. The older writers who expounded the philosophy of individualism emphasized the need of such pressure to make men work and save, at the same time as they argued that each man is the best judge of his own interests. Later writers, who credit men with less rationality than was the fashion a century ago, hold that economic individualism, involved in the current money economy, is a safeguard against failure to recognize where self interest lies. Professor John Maurice Clark's remark on this head is whimsical only in part:

> Individualism may be regarded, not so much as the system calculated to get the utmost out of a people of extremely high intelligence, as the system in which human stupidity can do the least harm.

With this powerful stimulation of individual efficiency, the business economy unites an opportunity for coöperation on a grand scale. By paying money prices, the leaders can enlist the aid of laborers who contribute work of all kinds, of expert advisers who contribute special knowledge, of landlords who contribute the uses of their property, and of investors who contribute the uses of their funds. And all these classes can be made to work in disciplined order toward the execution of a single plan. The fusing of incitements to individual efficiency with opportunity for wide coöperation is the great merit of the business economy.

* * *

That men like making and spending money as a way of organizing economic activity on the whole better than any other system they have yet practiced on a large scale, is indicated by its history. The business economy has grown out of the preferences of millions of men in successive generations and in all quarters of the world. The medieval king and his tenants, the lord of the manor and his serfs, seem all to have gained by substituting monetary payments for the rendering of personal services. No one forced the housewife to give up making her own bread and candles; no one forced the frontiersman to buy clothing in place of dressing in buckskin. It was because they preferred the new way of providing for their wants when the opportunity to choose was presented, that consumers patronized the retail shop selling factory products. So, too, banking could develop only as great numbers of people year after year found it useful. Not that the growth of money economy has involved no coercion, loss, and injustice—witness, for example, the tragic side of the enclosures which made possible farming for profit, the sufferings of peasants who could not learn the art of living on money, the oppressions exercised by money lenders, and the tragic struggle of the hand-loom weavers against the power loom. But broadly speaking, it seems clear that this feature of culture could have attained such general acceptance by the most advanced peoples of the world after so thorough a trial only because it seemed to meet their needs more adequately than the other forms of economic organization with which they have had experience.

Nevertheless, the business economy has obvious limitations as a system of organizing economic effort for the satisfaction of wants—limitations which must be noticed because they bear on the problem of business cycles.

1. The business economy provides for effective coördination of effort within each business enterprise, but not for effective coördination of effort among independent enterprises.

The two schemes of coördination differ in almost all respects. Coördination within an enterprise is the result of careful planning by experts; coördination among independent enterprises cannot be said to be planned at all; rather is it the unplanned result of natural selection in a struggle for business survival. Coördination within an enterprise has a definite aim—the making of profits; coördination among independent enterprises is limited by the conflicting aims of the several units. Coördination within an enterprise is maintained by a single authority possessed of power to carry its plans into effect; coördination among independent enterprises depends on many different authorities which have no power to enforce a common program, except so far as one can persuade or coerce others. As a result of these conditions, coördination within an enterprise is characterized by economy of effort; coördination among independent enterprises by waste.

In detail, then, economic activity is planned and directed with skill; but in the large there is neither general plan nor central direction. The charge that "capitalistic production is planless" therefore contains both an important element of truth and a large element of error. Apart from the transient programs of economic mobilization adopted under stress of war, civilized nations have not yet developed systematic plans for the sustenance of their populations; they continue to rely on the badly coördinated efforts of private initiative. Marked progress has been made,

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however, in the skill with which the latter efforts are directed, and also in the scale on which they are organized. The growth in the size of business enterprises controlled by a single management is a gain, because it increases the portion of the field in which close coördination of effort is feasible.

2. But the managerial skill of business enterprises is devoted to making money. If the test of efficiency in the direction of economic activity be that of determining what needs are most important for the common welfare and satisfying them in the most economical manner, the present system is subject to a further criticism. For, in nations where a few have incomes sufficient to gratify trifling whims and where many cannot buy things required to maintain their own efficiency or to give proper training to their children, it can hardly be argued that the goods which pay best are the goods most needed. It is no fault of the individual business leaders that they take prospective profits as their guide. On the contrary, they are compelled to do so; for the men who mix too much philanthropy with business soon cease to be leaders. But a system of economic organization which forces men to accept so technical an aim as pecuniary profit cannot direct their efforts with certainty toward their own ideals of public welfare. And government can remedy this defect only in part.

3. Even from the point of view of business, prospective profit is an uncertain, flickering light. For profits depend upon two variables—on margins between selling and buying prices and on the volume of trade—related to each other in unstable fashion, and each subject to perturbations from a multitude of unpredictable causes. That the system of prices has its own order is clear; but it is not less clear that this order fails to afford certainty of business success. Men of long experience and proved sagacity often find their calculations of profit upset by conjunctures which they could not anticipate. Thus the business economy confuses the guidance of economic activity by interjecting a large element of uncertainty into business ventures.

4. The hazards to be assumed grow greater with the extent of the market and with the time which elapses between the initiation and the fruition of an enterprise. But the progress of industrial technique is steadily widening markets, and requiring heavier investments of capital for future production. Hence the share in economic leadership which falls to lenders, that of reviewing the various chances offered them for investment, presents increasing difficulties. And a large proportion of these lenders, particularly of the lenders on long time, lack the capacity and training for the successful performance of such work.

These defects in the system of guiding economic activity and the bewildering complexity of the task itself allow the processes of economic life to fall into those recurrent disorders which constitute crises and depressions. To recognize this fact, however, is but the beginning of wisdom. Much patient analysis is required to discover just how these disorders arise, and why, instead of becoming chronic, they lead after a time to the revival of prosperity.

"Rebellion," by Mateel Howe Farnham, the daughter of Ed. Howe, the well-known Kansas editor, has been selected by *Pictorial Review* and Dodd, Mead & Company as the best manuscript among the approximately 1,500 submitted in their recent prize competition for the best "first novel." The story will appear serially in *Pictorial Review*, beginning in August, and will be publised in the fall by Dodd, Mead & Company.

Mrs. Farnham's story is a pointed picture of the inevitable growing away of one generation from that which nurtured and preceded it. The story is essentially that of a young girl about whom a father, through misunderstanding, endeavors to erect a high wall, keeping her for himself, and shutting her from the influences of her own day and generation. Youth, thus restricted, naturally rebels.

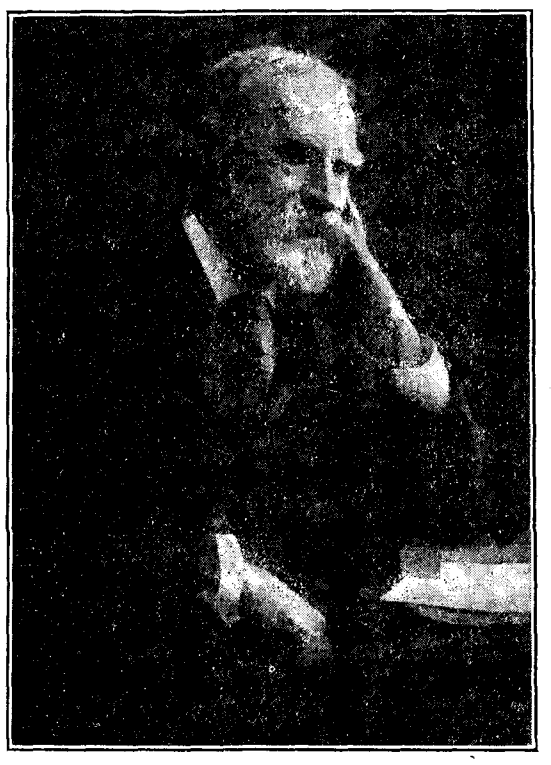
Compton Mackenzie has been appearing recently in "The School for Scandal" at Guernsey with Lady Sackville-West, the wife of the Governor of the island. He is a very clever amateur actor. His father was the founder and pillar of the Compton Comedy Company.

The "Mystery" of a Poet

THE SINGING CROW AND OTHER POEMS. By NATHALIA CRANE. Illustrated by Mac Harshberger. New York: Albert & Charles Boni. 1926. $2.

Reviewed by LOUIS UNTERMEYER
Author of "Collected Parodies"

IT is now just two years since I was first accused of being one of the authors of Nathalia Crane's poetry. Some of the literary sleuths went even further and charged me with being the author of Nathalia Crane. Disclaimers, rebuttals, denials, even threats of libel suits failed to convince the accusers that a girl of twelve and not a tottering graybeard of forty was actually responsible for "The Janitor's Boy." The subsequent appearance of "Lava Lane," instead of quieting the controversy only added fresh vigor to what, within a month, became almost a national issue. Nunnally Johnson, in a recent issue of *The American Mercury*, detailed the farcical eagerness with which lady journalists, self-appointed investigators, pseudo-psychoanalysts, suburbanites on the fringe of literature, and subscribers to the *Brooklyn Eagle* rushed into imperishable print determined to reveal the full extent of the hoax which was being foisted upon the innocent Republic. The fact that they did (or could) prove nothing of the sort checked neither the crusaders' enthusiasm nor their ignorance. With blithe impartiality they pointed to every national and local laureate as the only true begetter; a few even, after feverish deliberation, concluded that Nathalia Crane and her varied works were the results of a gay collaborative evening—a fiction invented "over the nuts and coffee" by the assembled contributors to the "Miscellany of American Poetry."



JAMES BRYCE
Of whom a new life by H. A. L. Fisher (Macmillan), was recently reviewed in these columns

The most cursory examination of both earlier volumes should be sufficient to expose the absurdity of the furore. Whatever the merits or demerits of this poetry (and it is by no means free of fault), Nathalia Crane writes like no one in America today. She is, first of all, herself—even when she borrows the swinging rhythms of Kipling, the over-alliteration of Swinburne, the cryptic imagery of Emily Dickinson. The first of these influences is the most definite as it is the most conscious. Nathalia has read her "Barrack Room Ballads," notes and all; but her first knowledge of Emily Dickinson, to whom she is spiritually akin, was a comparison in a review of Nathalia's own volume. The influence of her father has been still more stressed; he, also, has been named as one of the fell conspirators. Here the charge is still more ridiculous. Clarence Crane dominates Nathalia precisely as any father compels (and impels) his child. Possibly a trifle more, for Crane senior is an unwearying narrator and his daughter is an insatiable listener. The "plots" of some of the poems may be his—just as the sources of others may be traced to Ridpath's encyclopædia, Nathalia's dictionary, and the various travel circulars that find their way into the Crane household. But the translation of these hints, the metamorphosis of the fact into fancy, the incalculable leap and daring of the poet's mind are, as I have already insisted, indubitably Nathalia's own.

This is proved freshly on practically every page of "The Singing Crow." Sometimes, indeed, the accent is more personal than ever. Examine the sixteen lines entitled "The Rose Is Red." The inception of this poem is so revealing that it deserves to be known. When the two lady journalists were trying to "expose" Nathalia a year ago they selected a popular poem from "The Janitor's Boy" as a test case. The verse began:

> In the darkness who could answer for the color of a rose,
> Or the vestments of the May moth or the pilgrimage it goes. . . .

"What makes the rose red, Nathalia?" asked one of the cross-examiners, intent on proving that, if the child knew nothing of botanical chemistry, she could not possibly be the author of the line. "Don't you know?" countered Nathalia. "Of course *we* know," replied the inquisitor, "but we want you to answer. What makes the rose red?" The evening passed without satisfactory responses, but the curious may find one of the young poet's brightest moments in the reply entitled:

THE ROSE IS RED

The rose is red,
You wonder why?
The rose is red
From some strange dye.

No molecule
Or atom's brain
Achieved the candor
Of that stain.

Electrons never
Tinged that dew,
Or drained the ruby
For a hue.

But in some wan
Hegira's morn,
An angel leaned
Against a thorn.

The new volume is full of such surprises. Technically, "The Singing Crow" is Nathalia Crane's most astonishing work. The lay reader will be arrested by the book's variety of theme and mood; the craftsman will be amazed by the ease with which the thirteen-year-old artisan achieves her effects. There seems to be nothing she cannot do. In "The Advisers" she swings a line as robust as Kipling; the "Ballad of Valley Forge" is as broad as the best of Henry Newbolt; the accent of Emily Dickinson has been heard in recent poetry no more vividly than in phrases like:

> They drew together, two in jet,
> A destiny in silhouette

or:

> If tiny isles can hatch them
> We'd best beware the past;
> A leaf, turned prehistoric,
> May flatten us at last

or this quatrain, which originally did duty in Nathalia's prose romance, "The Sunken Garden":

> Oh, for a cup, filled by a buskined bee
> With melted scepters of serenity;
> Touched with the odors of the elder-rose,
> Brimmed with the drippings of a lost repose.

Few living poets have composed more single memorable couplets and quatrains than flash from these pages with an uncanny mixture of rapture and insouciance. What in spite of Nathalia's continued preoccupation with rosebuds, could be lovelier than:

> When they show their script-work
> Rosebuds bend the knee,
> Down upon his belly goes
> The buskined bee

or happier than:

> The scrub oaks roared, the cattails clicked,
> The bumble bees lay down and kicked

or more succinctly epigrammatic than:

> Oh, God in Heaven, give to us
> The faith to eye the waste;
> The courage of the copy shears,
> The patience of the paste.

And where has there been, in this generation, a gayer combination of challenge and wall-motto than:

> You cannot choose your battlefield,
> The gods do that for you,
> But you can plant a standard
> Where a standard never flew.

But the final answer to the skeptics is not so much the intrinsic individuality of Nathalia's work as its growth. A comparison of the first and third volumes discloses a triple development. First, the tone of voice: with two exceptions, the jingle of "The Janitor's Boy" is unheard; a depth of feeling,

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as though Nathalia was conscious that she was no longer a child, gives the personal poems something that, in an older poet, might well be maturity. Second, an insistent humor: "The Cockle Shell," "The First Stylists" (in which Nathalia traces the vogue of the short skirt to Eden), "The God of the Children" (in which the Creator ironically reproves the pedagogues), "The First Informer" (with its apostrophe to mirth)—all of these reveal a broadening of something which sharpens fantasy and intensifies wit. Third—and it is here that one observes the greatest advance—it is as a story-teller that Nathalia enters young ladyhood. The title-poem is a splendid and highly imaginative narrative *per se*, the tale of a crow who attains a voice surpassing any nightingale's; a story as delightful in concept as it is exciting in poetic detail. The poem (the longest one Nathalia has written), brims with such fortunate evocations as:

> The night delayed its starry arc,
> The dawn delayed to please the dark.

One might easily ransack the pages for quotations illustrating Nathalia's growth and power. Except for two unhappy inclusions the evidence is conclusive—and cumulative. The first two verses of "The Witnesses" say it all:

> Lo and behold,
> God made this starry wold,
> The maggot and the mold—
> Lo and behold.
> He taught the grass
> Contentment, blade by blade;
> The sanctity
> Of sameness in a shade.

This is the proof. And—what is more important—this is poetry.

The Playboy of Philosophy

THE ALMOST PERFECT STATE. By Don Marquis. New York: Doubleday, Page & Co. 1927.

Reviewed by Ellwood Hendrick

HERR FECHMEISTER FEHN taught his art of fencing to students at the University of Zurich, whither he had gone from Heidelberg where he began his career. He never tired of telling of the most famous student duelist of all time who was, if you please, "ein Amerikaner namens Green," and none other than the late Pinckney Green of Kentucky and New York. Green matriculated first at Tübingen, joined the Corps Suevia, and then shifted to Heidelberg where he wore the green, white, and black ribbon of the Corps Guestphalia. He was invincible. Giants came from Greifswald, who had heard of his prowess, got themselves *bestimmt* against him, inevitably to meet defeat. Green would finish them at his pleasure with a deep cut on the back of the head, which was the most difficult place to reach on tall men. Short, stocky fellows would likewise succumb to long, clean gashes on the face, which was the most difficult spot to reach on them. Green himself was hardly ever touched. "He played with his sword," said the Herr Fechmeister, "as a Spanish lady plays with her fan."

The German students' sword is a clumsy instrument, but Green was such an artist that his fame abides even unto this day.

Philosophy, as a plaything, is far too ponderous for most of us. We can't play with it to any effect unless we are thoughtful of it and respect it. It is not a toy for the tyro. And just as the Spanish lady respects her fan, with which she makes great conquests, or as "der berühmte Green" respected his schlaeger, so Don Marquis respects his philosophy; and, being a poet, he is able to put wings on the words that declare his ideas. Most of us labor and strain to deliver ourselves of our notions, and then we wonder why nobody stops to consider them. Marquis launches his flights of fancy into the blue, and he shows no signs of worry whether they find a nesting place or not; he is indeed the Playboy of Philosophy.

"The Almost Perfect State" seems light as air because it is so easy to read. Its chapters are divided into paragraphs, and nothing is told of anybody but the author, of whom it may be said that if you do not catch his wink you will miss his meaning. Sprinkled through are queries, answers, maxims, observations, principles, credos, saws, and desk mottoes. And yet it plumbs greater depths of human philosophy than the Westminster Shorter Catechism. Indeed it is an antidote for those who have been catechised unto gloom.

The idea of a Perfect State is discarded on grounds given by John Milton, perhaps unwillingly, but none the less with integrity, in "Paradise Lost." The lack of balance of our present civilization, with its extraordinary progress in the mechanic arts and in natural science, but with no corresponding advances in the art of living or government or in other phases of life, is corrected for the Almost Perfect State. The author writes along, always in good nature, sometimes with his tongue in his cheek and sometimes in deep earnestness under a smile, but never for a moment is he dull.

The book is made up of things written as the column conductor of The Sun Dial in the *Sun*, and The Lantern in the *Tribune*, with, doubtless, other memoranda recorded at divers times and seasons. The whole is so quotable that a reviewer finds himself smothered with marked passages; therefore his only safety from editorial compression is a total abstinence from citation.

From beginning to end there is a continuous protest against beans, as well as a constant insistence that they shall not be admitted into The Almost Perfect State. The writer of this review is by profession a chemist, and chemists, according to public opinion, seem to be without a sense of humor. Whenever an author wants to introduce a dull man into a story or a play he is likely to make a chemist of him who talks of nothing but hydrolysis, ionization, catalysis, the colloidal state, atomic numbers, the Periodic Law, and the like. It's the reviewer's desire to run true to form, even in the present undertaking, so that we shall discard all reference to what appears to be a Marquisian beanophobia as being humorous, even though an appendix is furnished which expounds the proper and delectable baking of these legumes. As a chemist one naturally looks for a deeper meaning to explain the animus, and his first thought is of the eminent Professor Beans who is past master of analysis as well as learned in the subtleties of physical chemistry. But why object to him so violently? True, the Professor is occasionally testy and sometimes almost shockingly frank in his expressions concerning both those and that, who and which, do not meet with his approval. He is not always gentle in examinations. We cannot, however, find the name of Don Marquis inscribed as a student at Columbia in the past, nor does "Who's Who" tell of his attendance at the great institution. If the shafts of his irony are directed against Professor Beans we cannot discover the cause. If, on the other hand, his protests are against beans as food, we can only say that the author has missed their rich vitamin and protein content.

Thunder in the Index

PREJUDICES: FIFTH SERIES. By H. L. Mencken. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1926. $2.50.

Reviewed by Hazleton Spencer
State College of Washington

LIKE its predecessors Mr. Mencken's latest volume of "Prejudices" is furnished with an excellent index, a glance at which is sufficient to establish the remarkable versatility of this writer's interests and also to raise the question, How can anyone pronounce wisely on so many unrelated topics? I have suggested elsewhere that Mr. Mencken's criticism has several points of resemblance to the statesmanship of the elder Roosevelt. Mr. Mencken would make awareness of Roosevelt's hollowness an infallible test of intelligence, but I would not push my parallel so far. We still cling to the necessity of a political cosmos, but no sane person nowadays insists that a literary critic is bound to present a philosophy. Emerson is mighty yet, despite the downright absurdity of his "system." Mr. Mencken stands with both feet on the Emersonian rock, blaspheming against conformity. Since his late jeopardy of his person in the cause of freedom under the very shadow of the Park Street Church, his prophesyings, no whit less fanatical, assume a new dignity. It is childish to accuse him of expecting profit for the *Mercury* out of that expedition to Brimstone Corner, but it undoubtedly resulted in a considerable increase of personal esteem for him.

Over the whole incredible American scene he continues in this volume to waggle his spotlight. Among the subjects which appear for the first time in a "Prejudices" index are: American Association of University Professors, Aristotle, Baptists, Cole Blease, Henry S. Canby, Catholic Church, Coca-Cola, Jean Cocteau, E. E. Cummings, James O. Curwood, Episcopalians, Holy Rollers, International Sunday School Lessons, Lydia Pinkham Vegetable Compound, Presbyterians, Judge Raulston, Rotary, and Y. M. C. A.

The old stand-bys are also there. Henry van Dyke hasn't missed an appearance since the first game was called. Dreiser is present of course, though for a quite different reason. Likewise Emerson and Howells. The Anti-Saloon League, with a zero score in the first and second series and but four references each in the third and fourth, makes eight in the fifth; while Mr. Coolidge, after a bad start in the third series, also bats for eight in the latest.

On the other hand, the *Atlantic Monthly*, which scored four mentions in the first series, two in the second, and one in the third, has not been heard from since. (Do the old ladies who rock on the hotel porches of New England still display the *Atlantic* as a sign that unconventional males had better not try to scrape acquaintance? Alas, it is said that the bright covers of Mr. Mencken's magazine serve another purpose). But if the *Atlantic* has dropped out of the fifth series, so has God, who got three page-references in the fourth. Another case of deliquium is that of Dr. Frank Crane, never absent before. His place is usurped by the debut of Coca-Cola.

I do not see that anything can be done about this. As long as Mr. Mencken humbly entitles his reprints "Prejudices" so long he disarms criticism, Whatever one thinks about Prohibition or democracy or the Uplift, only folly itself would attempt to debate with an opponent whose self-written label disclaims largeness of thought and dispassion, and who as likely as not would bound from the platform at the height of the proceedings to rush out and hold a street rally in favor of making Beethoven compulsory and passing a sumptuary law against Stravinsky.

Take Heart, Provincials!

(*Continued from page* 855)

journalist, "I want to get out of this factory-atmosphere,—I can't see the wood for the trees,—I want uninterrupted time in which to consider this welter of words all around me!" For the heightened tempo of the large city induces to mental and spiritual confusion and to a certain slavery to the opinion of popular arbiters. Just as it has been long and ably argued that, save as an occasional tonic to the spirits, New York is not necessarily the best but probably the worst place to which a young writer should come to carve himself a career; so it is probably one of the worst places for a person who intends to do any really intensive reading. We say "probably." There are many instances of quiet people who find it quite otherwise, who find that the very impersonality of a great city enables them to lose themselves in its crowds and to read, think, and dream with more stimulating results than they could obtain elsewhere. But we think they are the exceptions.

Finally, we desire to assert, out of considerable intimate experience, that overwhelming as is the multiplicity of published books, ninety-nine out of a hundred may be neglected without the slightest mental deprivation to the average reader. Without any large annual expenditure he can procure the books that really matter. And he can meanwhile be possessing himself of such a literary background, in a thorough acquaintance with the great work of the past, as is, unfortunately, the possession of but few of our metropolitan writers and critics of the day.

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Guilt for the War

FIVE WEEKS. The Surge of Public Opinion on the Eve of the Great War. By JONATHAN FRENCH SCOTT. New York: The John Day Company. 1927. $2.50.

Reviewed by CHARLES SEYMOUR
Yale University

THE pendulum of opinion on war guilt, as indicated in certain recent books, has swung so far in its reaction from the distorted popular thesis of ten years ago, that there is no little excitement in opening another book on this undying topic. At what unlucky individual, hitherto blameless, is the finger of suspicion to be pointed, and who is to be whitewashed? Mr. Scott, however, has not joined the ranks of those determined to discover an individual as scapegoat. Very early in his book he indicates his conviction that there is no evidence to show that any of the responsible statesmen in 1914 planned or desired a general war. He is definite in his assertion that the attempt to make of M. Poincaré the "double-dyed villain of the ghastly tragedy" rests upon the assumption of motives for which we have no proof. The case against individuals, he believes, cannot be maintained.

In this conviction Mr. Scott merely follows the views of such outstanding authorities as Gooch and Renouvin, and his book would not be of especial significance were it not for his analysis of public opinion during the crisis of 1914, as manifested in the press of the different countries. The size of the book prevents an exhaustive analysis, but the task was well worth undertaking and the objectivity of his tone gives us confidence in his judgment and conclusions. Those conclusions, which ought perhaps to be regarded as tentative, are extremely interesting. The author indicates that an influential part of the Austro-Hungarian press immediately after the murder of the Archduke urged moderation, and that in Germany there was no general demand that Austria take any action she might choose against Serbia. It was only after the crisis developed that opinion became so heated in Austria-Hungary as to make concessions difficult if not impossible; while in Germany, even up to the end, the prevailing mood was not one of bellicosity but rather a fatalistic acceptance of the necessity of war with Russia if it proved impossible to localize the Austro-Serb conflict. In Russia, if the press can be regarded as a fair exponent of opinion, there was a determination to protect Serbia, so strong that, in the opinion of Kerensky, a failure by the Government to meet this popular expectation would have resulted in its overthrow. In France, opinion was not belligerent but nevertheless was sympathetic with Serbia, insistent upon complete loyalty to the Russian alliance, and always marked by a suspicion of Germany. In Great Britain, opinion, at first friendly to Austria, turned away after the despatch of the ultimatum and ended in the conviction that Germany wished to precipitate war.

The story of the crisis as told in this survey of opinion, especially now that we know pretty well what was going on in the Chancelleries, is one of interest and value. Nevertheless it is difficult to accept Mr. Scott's main thesis that the influence of public opinion "was the most important factor in precipitating the war." To maintain this thesis it would be necessary to show that regard for or fear of public opinion influenced directly the decisions taken by the political chiefs at the critical moments. The uncompromising attitude of Berchtold and of Sazonoff was certainly reinforced by popular feeling. But Mr. Scott himself shows that the initial decision of Berchtold to crush Serbia, and the decision of Germany to give Austria a free hand were by no means adopted at the instance of an overwhelming popular demand. There is nothing to indicate that if opinion in Russia had been sluggish, Sazonoff would have permitted the revolution in the Balkan balance that Berchtold planned; quite the contrary. As appears from his own account, once Russia determined to mobilize, Germany's participation followed almost inevitably, and France and Great Britain were dragged in. And so far as Germany, France, and Great Britain were concerned, it was not the surge of public opinion but the commitments of diplomacy, the suspicion of the other side, the interposition of technical military considerations, which proved to be the decisive factors. The situation of 1914 was far too complex to be determined by any one scapegoat, whether an individual —an explanation which Mr. Scott judiciously excludes—or public opinion, as he avers. Nothing is more true than that the diplomats lost control over events; they were helpless to resist certain forces. As one of those forces, public opinion was certainly a factor of importance; but it is going too far in the direction of simplification to say that it is "the fundamental explanation of the disastrous outcome of the crisis."

Primitive Imperialism

CORTÉS, THE CONQUEROR. By HENRY DWIGHT SEDGWICK. Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company. 1926.

Reviewed by CARLETON BEALS

EXTREMADURA, province of Spain, soil that nourished Cortés and so many other restless sons of the conquest, was a region, says the author, "well-fitted to turn the thoughts of brooding days to feats of hardihood and desperate adventure." This desolate southwest corner of the Spanish plateau was included in my *Wanderjahr* in Spain and Portugal; there, today, brooding becomes despairing acquiescence in futility: the population is now brutalized, superstitious, ignorant, ragged; social cancer has eaten initiative.

Ixtapalapan, pueblo in Mexico, beneath the Hill of the Star (where at the end of every *xiuhmolpili*—"grass-bundle of fifty-two years"—the priests created new fire and new hope for the multitude), was at the time of the conquest, according to the early chronicler, Bernal Díaz, amazing: "like the enchantments . . . of Amadis, with flowers, temples, and other edifices, all of solid masonry, rising out of the waters." Many a day I have drowsed in the run-down plaza of Ixtapalapan; in this year of 1917, Ixtapalapan, though still beautiful because of its setting, is now merely an ignoble collection of one-story adobe houses sheltering an apathetic, half-famished population.

So the cycle of empire shifts; so glory shifted for Cortés, who after his world-shaking exploits spent the twilight of his life tagging the emperor from city to city, pleading in vain for recognition, denied even the courtesy of reply to his communications; so it is that in all Mexico there is no *memento mori* to the great captain—a pathetic anti-climax that the author of this volume does not fully exploit.

While the material on the conquest is so epic, so majestic, so romantic, so fantastic as to overleap all defects of portrayal and impress itself by its own gigantesque proportions and intrinsic drama, Sedgwick's effort is, nevertheless, unusually capable—almost too neatly capable. To the economy of rhetoric, he sticks closely and accurately to his material; selection rather than creation is his guide. The sharp narrative is the magnet determining his choice; the style is fluid, treatment chronological; background is woven into the narrative, a minor *motif*, heightening not obstructing the recital.

Sedgwick is intrigued by the cunning of Cortés, his manipulation of men, his indomitable courage, his Machiavellian temporizing, his lust for power, his clever use of religion to cloak immediate ends. Personally I regret that the author, even at the expense of unity and climax, instead of following the conventional pattern and data—all the physical facts of the conquest—did not give us more of the post-constructive efforts of Cortés, the rebuilding of Tenochtitlán, the administration of his *repartimientos* and his twenty-three thousand vassals, more of the intrigues that broke him and which supply clues to the subsequent period. And though Sedgwick is fascinated by Cortés's will to power, he has not himself been transubstantiated, he has not partaken of the flesh and blood of his god sufficiently to consider him a driving natural law of primitive imperialism. Any biography of a semi-barbarian hero must necessarily take Cellini's autobiography for its prototype, must be beyond good and evil in its portrayal and conclusions. Sedgwick trips over the old debris of Lilliputian moralizing and ethical justification, fortunately not at the expense of historical accuracy. Similarly he displays the 100 per cent emotional abhorrence of Indian sacrifices; he rejoices when the idols "hideous creatures, stinking with human blood, half human, half-brute," came crashing down. In the calmer judgment of four centuries, we realize that those idols had remarkable, aesthetic technique and were part of the nobler cultural evolution of a notable people. Too, the practice of human sacrifice involved a lofty genesiac conception, far more pristine than ours in this twentieth century when we chained our gods to the caissons of nationalism for the slaughter of millions. The Aztec practice, doubly brutal to us, since it involved spiritual salvation rather than pragmatic material aggrandizement, nevertheless sublimated primitive cruelty into organized ritualistic restraint as in contrast to the Inquisition with the organized utilitarian object of crushing rationalism. Similarly the social boiler of our own South might profit by such safety-valves as bull-fighting or the relegation of lynching to a priestly caste. The Aztec rites were an evolutionary instrument, for the Indians had already known Quetzalcoatl, the God who had discouraged human sacrifice, substituting bread, honey, and flowers as offerings; their legends tell of anti-vivisection factions among the sacerdotes; and the Indians were eager to welcome Cortés as the returning Quetzalcoatl. But the new gentler god branded them on face and arms, massacred them, tortured them, smashed their gods. The differences in ethical standards between conqueror and conquered were Tweedle-dee and Tweedle-dum. The significant factor was that the Spaniards brought mobility, horses, gunpowder, small-pox, and fulfilled an ancient prophecy. Hence both Indian cruelty and Spanish cruelty can only be analyzed as social phenomenon; emotionalism and ethics seem singularly inappropriate and unilluminating. Cortés was an instrumentality, as the author, himself contradictorally comes to realize, part of the exuberant *putsch* that subdued a continent and a half. It is not in any sense "an extremely scientific and modern point of view" to believe, as does the scrivener of the jacket decoy, who partly misinterprets the author, "that an obscure gland, so to speak, may sway the destiny of a continent."

Delightful Essays

AT THE SIGN OF SAGITTARIUS. By RICHARD B. INCE. New York: The John Day Company. 1927.

Reviewed by GLADYS GRAHAM

"IT is a rebellious sign; a skeptical sign; a rascally Voltairian sign if there be any truth in the claptrap of astrologers." So the good Dr. Johnson on the sign of Sagittarius in the motto selected by Richard Ince for his collection of philosophic fantasies. The book is all that astrologers could demand of one born under the sign of the archer—and much more besides. It is a book for loafing and inviting the soul. The manner and the matter of the tales form one of those happy marriages based on the attraction of opposites which are always so much more intriguing than the unions of like and like. A most gentle and disarming style, flowing swiftly but smoothly, bears on its broad surface the sharpest of ironies and the most caustic of witticisms with scarcely a ripple to mark their presence. It is the sort of book which, unfortunately, does not often come out of America: such a book as demands periods of incubation between the inception of ideas and their appearance on the printed page.

America, having discovered that there is no Santa Claus, must needs not later than the morrow issue an ultimatum to this effect properly decorated with exclamation points. Our transatlantic contempories, less astonished at the same discovery, are quite content to write, with sympathy somewhat, of kindly people or of stupid folk whose lives have been affected thus and so by the Kris Kringle tale. Mr. Ince took Church of England orders at Cambridge, but at the end of three years' parish work he gave up the ministry, finding "the Christian dogmas impossible to reconcile with reason and intellectual honesty." Still, it is of Christians he writes, early Christians and late ones; the charming Ursula granted temporarily the protection of that most unæsthetic female adornment, a beard; the Reverend Basil Bibber whose sermons were "so simple in substance and so naively delivered that the village idiot caught religion, waylaid Mr. Bibber at the Church door every Sunday evening, and pestered him to know what chances he had of being ordained;" Archbishop Adolf whose very dogs "had the air of having breathed so long that subdued atmosphere of princely piety and complacent good breeding that nothing but the possession of four legs and a tail and an occasional inclination to growl prevented them from yielding to the prevailing influence of sanctity and taking Holy Orders;" and a bright galaxy of others, sincere or hypocritical or both. It is reminiscent of Anatole France and James Branch Cabell but it is essentially Ralph B. Ince.

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The South Goes Democratic

MARCHING ON. By JAMES BOYD. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1927. $2.50.

Reviewed by JAMES SOUTHALL WILSON
Editor, *The Virginia Quarterly Review*

IT is inevitable, when a first novel has been so fine as James Boyd's "Drums," that the question asked of the second should be: "Is it as good as the other?" The fairer answer is that "Marching On" is worthy of the author of "Drums." Also it is twin brother to the earlier book. The story is of James Fraser, small-farmer descendent of the North Carolina Frasers who owe their Revolutionary fame to Mr. Boyd's "Drums." He loved Stewart Provost, daughter of the proud planter, Colonel Provost of "Beaumont." She, it scarcely needs to be said, has a young aristocratic lover, and James, thinking himself spurned, leaves his backwoods home to become a trainman in Wilmington, until the War between the States draws him into its vortex. Through field and camp and battle and prison, he fights bravely his miserable life on to the end of the war. The South is defeated; but Romance is never defeated.

Reduced to a bare outline, the story suggests old favorites that seem a little thread-bare now. In truth the plot is not wholly dissimilar to Mr. Boyd's own "Drums," but the fact is, the surer a reader is that the author is telling an old story the more conscious he is that he is making something new out of it.

The world is full of readers that like a good old-fashioned love story;—romances in which things happen. Swords must clash and men be killed; fans and hearts must flutter and women be loved. But always, though houses burn and men die by scores, the hero must bear a charmed life, and the reader must know it. "Marching On" is old fashioned romance—with a difference. It is a fresh, entertaining love story, full of heart interest, full of color. It is "wholesome and clean,"—no subtle psychological hair-splitting here; nothing sicklied o'er by the pale-thinking *intelligentsia*. And yet thousands of readers will read "Marching On" with pleasure, who would today find the historical novel of twenty years ago—of which these same phrases might have been spoken—pretentiously dull. The difference lies in the method of the telling. James Boyd reinterprets the old historical episodes in the light of the realistic historians. He gives to his romantic story the fulness of incident, the accuracy and minuteness of detail with an admixture of the sordid and ugly, that produce the effect of verisimilitude. So he convinces us. The garments, the manners, the incidents are of battles long ago but the people are just people. The vividness with which the story is told, its beauty and reality while we read it, make it good fiction whether we believe in it as a picture of life or not, when we have finished it.

* * *

Mr. Boyd has been more successful in making a period of North Carolina life seem to live than in creating individual characters. His hero, though he can run off three Yankees single-handed, killing two, never quite gets out of the pages of a book. The heroine is just a sweet impersonation of sprigged muslin like hundreds of her sisters. The aristocratic colonel is the stiff and courtly embodiment of the porcelain tradition that may have existed south of Virginia but which survived the Civil War chiefly in historical romances. The negroes are the usual blacked-face attendants of a war romance. But the Era lives. The reader enters into the throbbing life of the troubled but arrogantly confident South, as the author interprets it, and though he may question the accuracy of the interpretation, he feels that the human background of the book is artistically convincing.

There is what Stevenson would have called its "pith of philosophy," to "Marching On." In it the South goes Democratic; aristocracy crumbles. It presents the case for the poor whites of the South and it seeks to dissipate the glamour of tradition that is supposed still to cling to the Days befo' the War. But its history will not trouble good novel readers. Damnyankees will object to the pictures of their prisons and their soldiers, professional Southerners will be angered at the disillusioned portrayal of the Lost Cause and resent the homely description of Stonewall Jackson more than they did Mary Johnston's in "The Long Roll." Mr. Boyd should worry! He has written a novel that will be a rest and a refuge for minds weary of sex obsessions. It is a book that a Rotarian will enjoy and other intelligent men will not be ashamed to like. It isn't as good as "Drums" but then "Drums" was the *first* of the two and something of its charm was owing to its novelty. But "Drums" had a greater variety of character and incident, its characters took on a truer perspective of light and color, and then especially there was Willie Jones. But the same sweep of canvas, the same faithfulness to detail, the same effort to give a new significance to an old story mark both books. What really matters is that "Marching On" is jolly good reading.

Autobiographical Fiction

BERNARD QUESNAY. By ANDRÉ MAUROIS. Translated by Brian Downs. New York: D. Appleton & Co. 1927. $2.

Reviewed by H. H. BROWN

IN these days, when even the clear Gallic wit is blurred by murky air rising off recent fields of battle, and French literature reflects rather generally a condition of intellectual disorder, it is encouraging to encounter one author, like Maurois, who speaks so simply and surely of profound things. His recent semi-autobiographical novel, "Bernard Quesnay," ably translated into English by Brian Downs, is quite remarkable for the ease with which it supports a weighty load of matter. Here is no groaning, sweating, piling up of details, in the hope of convincing the reader by effect of pure mass; unerringly his subtle pen lights on the one fact which at a given moment properly illuminates his theme.

"Bernard Quesnay" is the story of a young man who at the close of the war finds himself, by dint of circumstances, compelled to enter the family business. Figuring accounts in his grandfather's dark, cavern-like office, Bernard's thuoghts dwell with Beethoven and Stravinsky: and onto the clicking of the looms, he embroiders the opening of "The Peasants' Rondo." Yet when a crisis occurs in the form of a strike, the old Quesnay blood stirs in his veins, and he remains at the helm in Pont-de-l'Eure despite the pleas of his mistress to visit her in Paris. Earlier he has been restive and uneasy during a holiday with Simone at the shore because a certain Puritan strain in his nature keeps protesting against even so brief a neglect of his still unwelcome duties. Before he has had time really to grasp the seriousness of his remissness toward the woman he loves, he receives a heartrending note announcing her unwillingness to hold a poor second place in his thoughts and their affair is over. Bernard returns a trifle grimly to Pont-de-l'Eure, and his sister-in-law, Françoise, who is bitterly restless under the deadening limitations of the Quesnay régime, senses in him a possible conspirator. For one mad instant, in a summer garden, their common restlessness flames upward in a kiss; then directly Bernard's Puritan instincts rebel; he considers it his duty to avoid Françoise; and she, thrown back upon her husband for sympathy, finally convinces Antoine to leave the company, and take up a richer, fuller life in the South. When a depression comes to the woolen market, Bernard is left alone to throw himself into the breach; and by force of having to think of business only, soon cares for nothing else. At the end of the story, stern and prematurely old, he has acquired quite the same legendary air, as that old feudal baron of industry, his grandfather.

* * *

Perhaps the outstanding artistic achievement of the book is its treatment of the strike. Primarily it is the effect of this occurrence in hastening Bernard toward his fatal goal which Maurois does, and should, emphasize; but at the same moment there are pictures of violence, vivid on their own account, and far reaching social implications unobtrusively suggested. Above all does the ironic approach to human behavior, which Maurois expressed so well in "Ariel," make itself apparent here. Their strike which sundered the whole country-side into opposing camps, and which sucked Bernard into the whirlpool from which he never escaped, arose from an entirely silly gesture of firmness on the part of the employers.

Curiously enough, emphasis is properly maintained in the French edition on the story of Bernard's absorption in business. It was only in preparing his book for the American market that Maurois felt it necessary to "pep" things up by adding six chapters on the incipient affair between the hero and his sister-in-law.

Mr. Morley in Light Vein

THE ARROW. By CHRISTOPHER MORLEY. New York: Doubleday, Page & Co. 1927. $2.
PLEASED TO MEET YOU. By CHRISTOPHER MORLEY. The same. $1.50 net.

Reviewed by SIDNEY HOWARD

MR. CHRISTOPHER MORLEY inhabits a Never-Never Land which certainly has its good points. He-men smoke pipes there and subsist on a diet composed of *Beaune Hospice, Homard Paprika, Musigny, Culotte de Boeuf garni au Vin de Madère,* 1911 *Chambertin, Filets Mignons piqués de truffes,* 1865 *Cognac,* quails *au basilic*—just to give you an idea. He-men are not ashamed, there, to succumb to a faintly literary, discreetly whimsical, boyishly arch, and harmlessly snobbish opinion of themselves. It helps the digestion, one supposes, of food and drink so heating to the blood, and enhances and varies what might become a monotony of delight. Morleyvia, as this country might be called, bears no slight resemblance to that world of Gorgonzola and water color discovered and described by the late F. Hopkinson Smith. It must be a pleasant place to spend vacations in. Mr. Morley has such talents, seems so lustily and alertly minded, that one cannot help regretting that he does not confine his visits there to his vacation times. The world behind the menu and the wine list has much to show which Mr. Morley might profitably inspect. He-men may smoke their pipes outside of Arcady.

* * *

The thing about these stories, clearly, is the writing. The writing of them mattered most frightfully to Mr. Morley and his readers must appreciate the pains he took with it if they are to appreciate "The Arrow" and "Pleased to Meet You" at all. "The Arrow" deals with the predicament of a well-read Rhodes scholar, whose heart is pierced by an arrow from the bow of the bronze Eros in Piccadilly Circus, all in honor of a little lady who wears a grey dress with a frill down the back and a knot of ribbon at the lower, or business, end of the frill. They drive to the Serpentine with a brick-faced cabby who lisps. "Pleased to Meet You" recounts the adventures of the labor president of Illyria and daughter (name of Nyla) in the rococo Palazzo Farniente, where the late Grand Duke's major domo and staff cause the commoners no end of gastronomical chagrin, what with their vintages and such which Mr. Morley understands and the commoners do not. The scene being Illyria, Mr. Morley—would you believe it?—leads off with certain not unfamiliar lines from "Twelfth Night." The stories, as usual with this author, are slight. The writing, also as usual with him, belongs to the flamboyant Madison Avenue gift shop style and is anything but slight.

There was a professor, once, at Harvard, who had a way of marking his students' themes with the ominous initials F. W. Too much of the well turned phrase and the too perfect simile and the too carefully conceived conceit make for what this Harvard professor meant by Fine Writing. Nothing in literature creates such a depressing effect as an apparent effort toward *l'art de bien dire*. Mr. Morley writes like an actor listening to his own voice and the effect of his writing is most painfully a complacent one.

* * *

Mr. Morley has gifts, principally, it would appear, for enjoying himself. They are not mean gifts: they are both rare and individual. He has humor, too, and an agreeable wit and a most ingratiating intention. He knows enough about himself and he understands both his gifts and their limitations. He has great possessions, though, and his pride in them is his undoing. He is eternally preoccupied with things: bookish things and gastronomical things. His very medium of expression is a collection of things to him. One fancies him hoarding it, adding to it, cataloguing it, displaying it, pampering it. He would, one may be certain, vaunt the telling of these stories far above the stories themselves. That is their weakness and his own. They are strangled, and so is he, in an elaboration of unimportant unreality.

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O. Henry Prize Stories

PRIZE STORIES OF 1926. (The O. Henry Memorial Award). With an Introduction by BLANCHE COLTON WILLIAMS. New York: Doubleday, Page & Co. 1927.

Reviewed by LOUIS KRONENBERGER

AS long as the American short-story looks back, if only with half an eye, to O. Henry for guidance, it is doomed to accept the false coin of O. Henry's facility, ingenuity, and technical resourcefulness as its standards. O. Henry had enough individuality and gave people enough enjoyment to deserve the recognition (though not the praise) which he received; but his example has directed the short-story in America up a blind alley from which, thus far, it has not escaped. The greatest tribute these prize stories pay O. Henry is not the use of his name, but the imitation of his method. For almost a generation our magazines have virtually thrived on the O. Henry formulæ with their many variations, and during that period short-story technique in America has grown constantly more expert—and more stereotyped. Validity and vitality of subject-matter have counted for less than proficiency of technique, and most of the authors who get into a collection like this have mastered some one else's craftsmanship rather than developed their own. This 1926 exhibit is similar to earlier ones. There are the same kinds of stories, the same technique, the same magazines, the same kinds of authors. First prize, this year, goes to "Bubbles," by Wilbur Daniel Steele.

"Bubbles" is a masterpiece of complication, if not of art. It is seen through the eyes of a little girl who does not comprehend what is happening, that the reader may indirectly understand the situation—the insanity of the child's mother and the resultant life of her father—and eventually respond to the hidden horror it invokes. To me the story is not convincing enough to be really successful. And I think that the more sophisticated the reader is, the more his mind will be diverted from the emotional and human interests of the story to its technical convolutions. Despite deft craftsmanship, the story fails to become important, and even its pattern is beautiful artifice rather than art.

Second prize this year goes to Sherwood Anderson for "A Death in the Woods"—a chapter in Anderson's "Tar." In this story of a woman whose function in life was simply to feed animals and men, there is something more authentic, something simple and moving and real, which, though wastefully told, is told impressively.

Not a great deal need be said of the other stories. They are depressingly "various"—Chinese stories, Negro stories, New England coast stories, Ninth Avenue stories—stories which remind you how many sides life has, but which do not bring you greatly into contact with life itself. Toward the end of the book is a rather powerful tale called "Cane River." Elsewhere Booth Tarkington deals exaggeratedly with character; Ben Ames Williams is a little too unrestrained to be good; Mary Heaton Vorse, with a striking theme, is dull—but it would be pointless to catalogue all these stories. None of them is outstanding, and what is less pardonable, not many of them are truly interesting. For American short stories suffer from a second ailment, quite as bad as their rubber-stamp technique. Much carrying-on about "significance" and "true art" and "life-values" and other deep-sea qualities of literature, has reduced the short story to a state where pretentiousness has overthrown humor and warmth, charm and grace. The Bunner and Stockton tradition is dead. Except for "Claustrophobia" none of these stories can be said to add to the gaiety of nations. Instead, Miss Williams in her introduction considers each story with critical seriousness, and analyzes, and praises, and compares, till one can't help wondering what she would say of a Chekhov or a Maupassant. When people make an elaborate analysis of a story containing such dialogue as "If you had been willing to follow me, to have walked out there in that spacious tranquillity, hand in hand with me, under the quiet stars"—then short story criticism furnishes a handsome counterpart to short story writing which is neither artistic nor real, nor promising.

The Bowling Green

Granules from an Hour-Glass

THE word in my mind, for reasons of my own, as I came down Sixth Avenue in the rain, was *humility*. At the entrance of the Hippodrome was a crowd, watching some advertising stunt in the doorway. It struck me, guiltily, that a real writer—a Shakespeare, a Kipling—would have halted to see what it was all about; digested it, taken it in. But I was so absorbed in my notions I didn't want to stop. Pacing along in the wet, with head lowered, at the 42nd Street corner I collided sharply with an old man whose pipe fell out of his mouth at the impact (he had less than a full quantum of teeth, poor ancient). He burst into screams of abuse: "You——, you——!" he kept raving at me, using lively words beginning with b's. I don't think it was more my fault than his, but I was so sorry for him I was quite speechless. He was wild with rage, and continued to screech oaths until I was almost angry—or perhaps, as people gathered to stare, I felt, for my own countenance, I ought to pretend I was angry. Yet he wasn't damaged and his pipe not broken. I wondered what grievances he may have borne to make him so wild, poor devil. He positively drooled with rage.

There's a big sign above the Boardwalk in Atlantic City, which says *Have you seen* ABIE'S IRISH ROSE? *If not you should. Millions and Millions have—Why not You?*

I was sitting peaceably on the railing at the edge of the Boardwalk, meditating this. I was wondering whether it might be considered an unconscious revelation of a fundamental American doctrine, that what is good for a great many people is good for me. (It's the word *should* on that sign that is important.) I had got as far as the thought that this notion is a lively example of what Sir Thomas Browne called *pseudodoxia epidemica;* but I came to no conclusion, for at that moment a cop came up to me and spoke quite savagely. "Here," he shouted, "you're not allowed to sit on that rail."

The paregoric influence of a familiar phrase. (The etymology of the word *paregoric* is interesting, if you should look it up.) The brakeman in the Shoreliner, going up to Providence, was telling a friend of his troubles with passengers who insist on playing cards on Sunday. "It's against the Law of the Land," he kept saying, again and again. Of what land, I wondered. Connecticut? Rhode Island? And how eminently New England, that a hard-boiled New Haven brakeman should worry about such matters. For I cannot rid myself of the doubt that there is any law (of the Land as a Whole) that denies cards on Sunday. But above the noise of the smoker I could hear him say, over and over, comforting himself with syllables, "It's against the Law of the Land."

The American Matriarchy: I was studying a rather appalling bronze medal awarded ("For Quality of Macaroons") by the Sesquicentennial Exposition in Philadelphia. The design of the medal was thus officially explained:

> The Spirit of America . . . symbolized by the alert and decorative form of a young bald eagle. To stress the fecundity of America and its promise for the future the sculptor has purposely chosen the mother eagle and has placed within the nest the eggs which are the symbol of continuing productivity. The nest itself, fashioned of oak, bespeaks the strength of the American home . . . in the background whence sprang the eagle of freedom, Independence Hall is outlined against the rising sun of American prosperity.

"And have they, in England also" (I asked our delightful visitrix), "been all steamed up about Marcel Proust?"

I knew that they had, but I knew this was the kind of question an Intellectual Woman would enjoy answering.

"Yes, indeed," she replied flagrantly, "but the Marcel Wave is subsiding."

"I love malicious people," she said. "Henry James, Pearsall Smith, how delightfully bitter."

"But naturally. They were Americans living in England."

I caught a flash from her fine Boadicea eyes: a sound of Arthurian trumpets blown on the towers of Camelot: a flag hoisted: clink of sabres as the guard changed in Whitehall.

"Ah, America," she said . . . "the last stand of the Ten Commandments—"

"In England, I hear, they've been decimated—"

The simple bysitter would have thought they were quarreling. But it was all part of that exquisite *code duello* by which people explore each other's minds. The experienced hoodwinker, how well he recognizes (and rejoices in) the arts of manœuvre in any other brisk practitioner. How much more ground than the bysitter would suspect is traversed under the stratagem of repartee. Business, as the merchant might say but never does, Going On During Altercations.

David Lipschutz brightened the morning for me. When I started up Sixth Avenue in his taxicab, he made the usual automatic gesture of flipping over the little flag to start the meter. But something stuck, the meter wouldn't go. He pulled up alongside the curb and tinkered anxiously, but still the apparatus abstained. Meanwhile I was in a hurry. A small private orison to Demeter (goddess of taxicabs) did not seem to avail; I was about to quest another vehicle when David, after some work with a wrench, got her in gear.

Secretly I wondered whether this hasty treatment might have agitated the meter, it might now run double quick. But concealing this morbid fixation I merely remarked, through the open window, that demurrage on the part of the meter was sufficiently rare. (What I actually said, of course, was "Well, buddy, I guess that don't happen often, does it?")

David grinned infectiously. "I been riding around so long without pickin' anybody up, I guess she got sore."

P. Y. M. and I were coming along 33rd Street toward the Long Island Station. Pasted on the side of a wagon, in large red letters, we saw the announcement, something like this:—JANE EYRE, *by Charlotte Bronte—The Love Story of an Unhappy Young Girl—In the Evening Graphic.* We gazed at each other, silent on a peak of the bookselling instinct. P. Y. M., excellent fellow (he works for the Oxford University Press), said just what I hoped he would. "I wonder if there isn't some way for us to ride on that? We've got a mighty nice little edition of Jane Eyre in the World's Classics Series."

We read in the papers about the landing gear of airplanes, and how daring aviators drop it before a long flight. It struck me that that is exactly what humanity has done as a whole—it finds itself in mid-air without landing gear and can't come down without a crash; or else on the unplumbed, salt, estranging sea. Henry Adams divined this pretty clearly; and others too before him—Walt Whitman, for instance.

I shan't forget you, Nancy. The ribby barrel of your torso, your spare flanks, your long quick legs, the tall arch of your quarters—not just haunches, but real thighs. The pure fawn-color of your coat, the strong white paddy feet, the crisp ridge of cowlick down your nose, your soft dark muzzle, your great uncropped ears. Your proud unspoiled head, held so high; your unchastized eyes, fierce and confiding; the lean bulge of your shoulder-blades when you crouched to blink by the fire.

In that orchard under the cool apple-trees you seemed to need a nymph, a white goddess to be mirrored, very tiny, in the clear topaz of your eyes. Virgin bitches such as you, perhaps, went with Diana to her pool. They mocked me, Nancy, when I said that it would be worth while to be torn in pieces by such a dog—worth while for the tearing as well as the cause of being torn. It was a silly saying, yet when did not beauty promote us to saying silly things?

I don't like people who palaver dogs in public; but you, since you will never guess your marvel, I am not loath to praise. Proudest of Great Danes, I think of you and your mistress on a green hillside of apple trees.

CHRISTOPHER MORLEY.

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Books of Special Interest

Narcotics

NARCOTIC EDUCATION. By H. S. MIDDLEMISS. Edited Report of Proceedings of the First World Conference on Narcotic Education; Philadelphia, July 5-9, 1926.

Reviewed by JOHN PALMER GAVIT
Author of "Opium"

"I SHOULD worry; let George do it," seems to be the attitude of the average American citizen—and the average citizen of every other country, for that matter—toward the peril and the problem of the abuse of narcotics. The world is a good distance yet from realization of either the sinister nature or the magnitude of the menace. Allowing some margin for sentimentalism and gush over poor, defective creatures, flotsam and jetsam of civilization, who would go to the dogs in some other way if there were not drugs, for hysterical exaggeration by persons congenitally addicted to extremes; nevertheless it is undoubtedly true that addiction to narcotic drugs, morphine, heroin and cocaine especially, is not only one of the great evils of our day, but is increasing alarmingly. And behind it is an extremely profitable international traffic, ruthless, sleepless, intricately and all but universally organized, feeding upon the insatiable appetite which drug addiction fastens almost incurably upon those caught in its web.

One need look but slightly under the surface of everyday social life to come upon the intermeshed threads of this web. Few persons of any considerable extent of acquaintance could not find, if they knew how to look, within their own circle the ghastly work of this most cunning of the devils. Drug addiction can go a long time undiscovered—it does not unsteady the gait or redden the nose; by the time it discloses itself it is usually far beyond cure.

Before any effective steps toward meeting the evil can be taken, or will be taken, with the indispensable backing of public opinion, the community must be awakened. Tom, Dick, and Harry; Jane Doe and Martha Robinson, each of whom may perhaps be concealing in the heart the tragedy of a victim among close friends, must come to know with that kind of knowledge that leads to comparing notes and joining in common action, how widespread is the danger, and how desperate the need of determined and united effort.

This is what gives value to the "World Conference on Narcotic Education," held last July at Philadelphia, and to the verbatim report of its proceedings, just now published. It is full of just the kind of information one needs; even if it is rather a hodge-podge, of cool, scientific papers cheek-by-jowl with excited utterances of persons full of good intentions and half-digested "statistics" in some instances of dubious authenticity. But on the whole and all allowances made, this is a book to be treated with the respect owing to those who bravely pioneer. No person can read it even casually without gaining the impression that here is a social problem of major importance, calling for a great deal more attention than it has had.

This conference devoted itself more particularly to the question of personal addiction and its consequences to individuals and to the community through them. But there is another phase of it, quite as vital; it seems to me, much more so. Observing as I did personally throughout both, the two great international opium conferences at Geneva in 1924-5, and at the same time devoting considerable study to collateral phases not dealt with by either of those conferences, I became profoundly convinced that no extent of control, certainly no mere dealing with the individual casualties, within this or any other country; no domestic legislation, state or federal; no police activities at retail, will serve to check the flood of narcotic drugs now surging about the world. All that, however commendable and desirable in itself, is "fishing behind the net," so long as the great nations which call themselves civilized continue to produce these drugs in a quantity certainly at least tenfold the legitimate needs of medicine and science, and regard it as lawful, not to say decent, to compete in all waters for the "market"—consisting almost wholly of addicts. In the Hague Opium Convention of 1912 the nations pledged themselves to limit manufacture of narcotic drugs to the amount needed for *bona fide* medicine and science. As yet no nation, including the United States, has done that, or taken adequate steps to that end. And these drugs, almost everywhere in the world, are supplanting the crude opium of old.

This question was hardly touched at the Philadelphia conference; yet it is fundamental.

The Second Conference is appointed to be held in London in 1931. Upon the foundation thus laid work can proceed, increasingly intelligent and effective, awakening the nations to an international obligation, which in fact they assumed twelve years ago.

In Ecuador

ON THE TRAIL OF THE UNKNOWN. By GEORGE MILLER DYOTT. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. 1926. $6.50.

Reviewed by KERMIT ROOSEVELT

THOSE who are acquainted with Mr. Dyott through the medium of his book "Silent Highways of the Jungle" will welcome any opportunity to renew that acquaintance. Nor will they be disappointed in their anticipations when they delve into "On the Trail of the Unknown." Dyott is that unfortunately rarely to be found combination of the genuine explorer and natural writer. He does remarkable pieces of exploration and writes about them in a remarkably interesting manner.

The expedition of which he tells in this last volume was undertaken with the particular aim of exploring certain of the larger unknown mountain peaks of the hinterland of Ecuador. The resources at his disposal did not permit of an elaborately planned assault upon the peaks; and Dyott was obliged to make out the best he could depending largely upon what material he could find on the spot. He not only understands from intimate first-hand knowledge the manner in which to handle the South American Indians and mestiços, but he is blessed with a constitution peculiarly adapted to work in the tropics.

When your funds are limited you must of course cut your cloth to suit, and Dyott had taken with him only one companion. Their main objective was the securing of a photographic record of the wholly unknown and partially unknown regions which they traversed. In this they were signally successful as all who have had the opportunity to see their moving pictures will testify. The naturalist will of course regret that they were unable to take advantage of their opportunities for bringing back specimens of the birds and mammals with which they met. How unusual were these chances is illustrated by the fact that Dyott secured excellent photographs of a mountain tapir of which there exists no specimen in the museums of this country.

Dyott has the happy faculty of appreciating and liking the natives of the country. So often travellers go forth with an *idée fixe* that there is no country but their native land, whether they designate it as "God's Country" or the "Little Isle." They have a permanent chip on the shoulder; everyone they meet is either a liar or a thief, generally both, with complete and utter incompetence thrown in. Such an account makes tiresome reading, and you soon become exasperated and throw the book aside. It seems pointless to travel, and doubly pointless to write about it, if you have set out prepared to appraise everything and everyone you meet upon the wholly fictitious standard of what you imagine your own countrymen to be.

Dyott has his difficulties with the natives; they attempt to cheat him, and desert him when he most needs them, but he never hurls anathema at a community because of the shortcomings of some of its members. He gives delightful pictures of some of the more important residents of the outposts where he was so often detained waiting for means of transport to proceed on his way. He writes in such an unassuming and matter of fact manner in regards to the obstacles with which he is faced, that those who do not know the tropics at first hand will be apt to underestimate his achievement. Those who have experienced some of the same difficulties and faced the same problems will readily appreciate Dyott's accomplishment at its true worth.

Dyott has just returned from another South American expedition retracing the route of the Roosevelt-Rondon exploration of the River of Doubt. Once again he has met dangers and overcome difficulties and we may look forward to another graphic account of travel along the tributaries of the Amazon.

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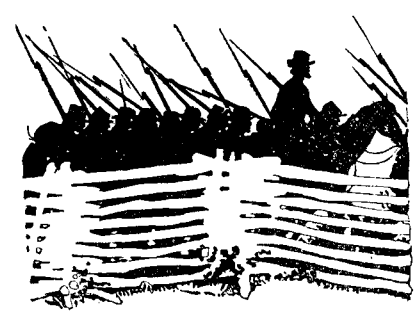

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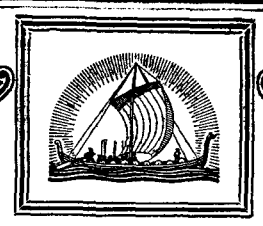

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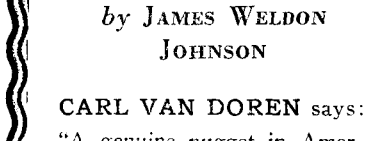

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A Fragment of Genius

BENITO CERENO. By HERMAN MELVILLE. New York: Random House. London: The Nonesuch Press. 1927. $7.50.

Reviewed by HENRY SEIDEL CANBY

THIS very beautiful edition, with special pictures by E. McKnight Kauffer, is a worthy format for a strange tale. Melville's story, first published in 1856 in "Piazza Tales," is a side piece (quite possibly a forecast) for "Moby Dick." It is a sea narrative in which a brooding chorus of mysterious negroes sit and march upon a ship over which some unknown doom hangs. When the friendly Yankee captain boards the tattered hulk of the strange ship he meets a white captain so distraught that he cannot lucidly explain what has happened. A servant follows him doggedly, a giant negro in chains waits before the cabin door, Ashantis in a row sharpen hatchets, while the negro women sing, and the few whites are lost among the blacks. It is a mystery in which the impending weight of barbarous black power gradually comes to realization. With uncanny forecast of the method of Conrad, Melville, by mere description, raises wave after wave of emotional intensity until with no clue, no real happening, a ghastly situation is felt though not understood.

The solution is simple and crudely embraced in a court record of mutiny and attempted escape to Africa, inserted at the end. Melville has not yet learned the art of narrative development. Indeed he never learned it, for "Moby Dick" is successful only because of a superhuman attempt to fuse brilliant passages into a whole whose only unity is centripetal. And yet, repetitive as "Benito Cereno" is, and mechanical as the device of its solution, it is impossible not to be impressed with the brooding genius of the main story: the skilful Poe is rococo and macabre beside this solemn mystery of white and black.

> "You are saved," cried Captain Delano [to the rescued Spanish captain] . . . you are saved: what has cast such a shadow upon you?
>
> "The negro."
>
> There was silence, while the moody man sat, slowly and unconsciously gathering his mantle about him as if it were a pall.

A strange, irregular genius, Herman Melville still awaits final definition. His visual imagination has never been exceeded. He is the Leviathan of all sea writers, but there is always something spectral in his creations. Fog blows through them, a rib is missing, there is an irrelevant member, or a crude joining as of an animal made in pain and wonder. Only the White Whale came through as its creator willed it, but as time goes on we shall pick up more and more fragments of genius from the wrecks strewn along his literary career. This is one.

A Child's Eye View

THE LIFE OF DARWIN. By LEONARD HUXLEY. New York: Greenberg. 1927. $1.75.

Reviewed by JOHN BAKELESS

THE career of Charles Darwin is the happy hunting ground of biographers. The man is perennially interesting. His importance as a world-shaker is unescapable. His personality needs no retouching to be made delightful. Material of every kind —notes, letters, family records, earlier biographies, reminiscences—are abundant. The subject has even been accommodating enough to write an autobiography, thus fixing the main landmarks of his life, and in the "Voyage of the Beagle" has laid open the earliest germinating stage of his great idea.

But where the honey and the pollen are so abundant—for we must have a biological metaphor on such a subject—the bees are likely to be thickest. Poor Darwin has been biographed very nearly to death. Not even the artless charm of the autobiography discourages these indefatigable life-scribblers. Only last year Mr. Gamaliel Bradford had at him with his "psychographic" kodak, and now here is Mr. Leonard Huxley—editor of *Cornhill*, son of the great Thomas, father of Aldous, who would not object to the adjective, and also of Julian, who pretty nearly deserves it—and he proffers a volume, no thicker than a first book of poems, on the Life of Darwin.

So much has been said on his subject, it can hardly be pretended that Mr. Huxley says anything very new. Being a Huxley, he inevitably says it very well. It is a thousand pities, however, that he did not give up the idea of a biography, and write instead an informal book—as big a book as possible, but no bigger—containing simply his personal reminiscences of Charles Darwin. That would have been something to raise a lusty cheer about; for it is when he is frankly reminiscent that Mr. Huxley is at his best. He gets in that story about the sixpence which I missed in Mr. Bradford's book. Having been a small boy playing Red Indians with the Darwin boys —with Charles Darwin sympathetically in the background—having watched Darwin playing backgammon, having breakfasted with the Darwins, and being able to describe the stir in the Huxley household when Darwin came a-visiting, he writes an unsurpassed eight pages on "Home Life." But why not eighty? Why spend more than a hundred pages on saying with perfect competence what others have already said as well, and then toss off a scant eight pages of what you alone can say?

Mr. Huxley's Darwin is a good book but it is also a great chance missed!

An Unconvincing Portrait

MORE MILES. By HARRY KEMP. New York: Boni & Liveright. 1927. $3.

Reviewed by CLEVELAND B. CHASE

THERE is no more effective method of disarming criticism than to boast, boast loudly, flagrantly, convincingly of deeds that are open to censure. Harry Kemp boasts. He boasts of being a third-rate *pseudo-genius in Greenwich village*, strutting around, posing, sponging on friends and strangers; he boasts of being a thoroughgoing cad, a braggart, a loafer for whom the phrase "living and dying for poetry" serves as a meaningless justification; he boasts of living on women, of his inability to be honest and sincere with anyone, of his treachery, his shiftlessness, his lack of all decency, his unbelievable pettiness.

As he boasts with this arresting candor, a character forms in one's mind. Every vice that he confesses has a counterpart in most of us. One gets to feeling, "Given proper conditions, we might all be like that." Kemp takes one in. One begins to feel that by the audacity, the starkness of his confession he, like Rousseau, Casanova, and Cellini, has made a permanent contribution to literature.

Perhaps the present reviewer is slow, but it was not until such a flattering opinion had taken the place of his original annoyance that he began to realize how completely Mr. Kemp was putting it over on him. His eyes were not entirely opened until he reached the illuminating sentence, "One method I had of making my friends like me was giving them a chance to feel superior"—which is the essence of the method of this book. The reader is constantly and somewhat obviously encouraged to feel superior. It is a fair enough journalistic trick. The world is willing to pay for being made to feel superior. But it is literary dishonesty, and as such, it invalidates the writing.

Once having tracked down the dishonesty, other evidences of it quickly become apparent. Kemp is, ostensiby, writing the truth, exposing himself ruthlessly, shamelessly. At bottom he is not nearly so ingenuous. He has his eye cocked for effect, as, for example, when he describes his living conditions in a New Jersey bungalow in the dead of winter: "A half-finished can of baked beans stood close at hand, on the arm of a Morris chair. All the spoons being dirty, I had been eating the beans out of a can with a shoe horn." So far, fine, but the poseur must add in the next line, "On the seat of the same chair lay, face downward, an open volume of Wordsworth . . ." Once one might pass up such a juxtaposition, but the same thing occurs constantly. It is difficult enough at best to write truthfully about oneself. It is impossible when one is eternally preoccupied with what people will think of one's confessions.

As it continues, the book becomes more and more preposterous. Mr. Kemp is romanticizing and dramatizing beyond all bounds. The character that he finally evokes is no more life-like than Pollyanna. It may be a picture of Mr. Kemp as he would, perversely, have liked to have been when he was flouting the opinion of the world; it might even be a picture of him as he thought he was; that it is at all like him as he really was is inconceivable. The final proof of the unconvincingness of the portrait is that one leaves it feeling that, after all, Mr. Kemp is probably a thoroughly likable person whose main fault lies in his delusion that he is very wicked.

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Foreign Literature

German Poetry

DIE VERGESSENEN: A Hundred German Poems from the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries. Chosen by HEINRICH FISTHER. Berlin: Paul Cassirer.

DEUTSCHES LESEBUCH. (Second, enlarged edition). Edited by HUGO VON HOFMANNSTHAL. 1927. Munich: Verlag der Bremer Presse.

Reviewed by A. W. G. RANDALL

THE compiler of "Die Vergessenen" claims to be doing tardy justice to numerous German poets who have been paid insufficient attention by literary historians or anthologists; he also sets up his work as a monument to the fallen in the Great War. The latter motive finds its explanation in the number of poems he has chosen dealing with war, such as Paul Fleming's poem of the year 1633, a fervent thanksgiving for the end of strife. But it is not by any means as a propagandist effort that this attractively-produced collection should be judged. It is, for the most part, a revival of many poems, particularly of the eighteenth century, which deserved to be rescued from oblivion. The delicious "Nänie" on the death of a quail, by Karl Wilhelm Ramler, for example, which, by a coincidence, Herr Rudolf Borchardt recently claimed as a "discovery" in his "Ewiger Vorrat Deutscher Poesie," no more deserved to be forgotten than Andrew Marvel's "The Girl Describes Her Fawn." And there are two other poems by the same writer, who is practically unrepresented in the whole of Germany anthology-literature. Of Paul Fleming, Hofmann von Hoffmannswaldau, Andreas Gryphius, and Weckherlin it can hardly be said that they are forgotten and Johann Christian Günther is at least rescued from obscurity by Goethe's testimony to his genuine poetic gifts. Herr Fischer, however, gives a far wider seelction from all these than any other anthology we remember, and his collection is not only a delight in itself, but, with its notes and biographical and critical sketches, is a real service to scholarship. Of late years, parallel to the revival of appreciation for the English poets of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, there has been a German fashion of almost equal importance, for the so-called "Baroque" poetry. Those who wish to appreciate this without the trouble of extensive research would do well to get Herr Fischer's volume, the textual accuracy of which he guarantees.

❧ ❧

About three years ago the exquisite taste of Hugo von Hofmannsthal, and the typographical distinction of the Bremer Presse combined to give us an anthology of German prose on which, we thought at the time, it would be difficult to improve. This, however, has not been the thought of the editor, for here is a second edition, which is not only enlarged by the addition of twenty or so extracts not found in the first edition, but is improved by the substitution of better selections in certain instances, and by the inclusion of several "Gedenktafel," as Herr von Hofmannsthal calls them, or short biographical and bibliographical, appreciative notices of the less well-known writers whose works have been drawn upon. In his first edition Herr von Hofmannsthal limited his choice of extracts to the century between 1750 and 1850. This was an obviously sound choice; the lower date shut out only one German prose-writer of merit, Grimmelshausen, and even he would have looked out of place in the classical, polished surroundings. In his second edition Herr von Hofmannsthal has slightly raised his later date, but chiefly so as to include Nietzsche, whose beautiful prose it in any case seemed unjust to exclude from a really representative "reading-book" of German prose-literature.

The result may now fairly be called an eye-opener for all but the widest and deepest-read student of German literature. The tradition of the uncouthness of German prose, or at least its importance on account of its matter rather than its manner, here receives a severe check, and that by no means on account of extracts from the more familiar writers. It is one of the chief merits of Herr von Hofmannsthal's collection that it gives, besides the *loci classici* from Goethe, (the impression of St. Philip Neri), Winckelmann (description of the Belvedere torso), Kant (the famous "starry skies above me and the moral law within" passage), Herder (the chapter on Moses), Ranke (sketch of Richelieu), Mommsen (sketch of Sulla), Adam Müller (one of his "Reden" on the German language), the Brothers Grimm (introduction to the Fairy-tales)—while these and a score or so more of the familiar passages from great German prose-writers, historians, and philosophers are included, plenty of room has been found for the less famous, but, from the point of view of prose-style, scarcely less notable. Particularly, since they were not included in the earlier edition, are to be noted the extracts from the correspondence of great German composers such as Mozart and Beethoven; there are also a first-rate piece of description by Moltke, letters and speeches—excellent specimens of German oratory—by Bismarck, Grillparzer, Feuerbach, beautiful pages from Jakob Burckhardt and a culture-historian and traveller who has been too much neglected, Fallmerayer, and finally—though to complete the list would take many more lines—a beautiful description by Victor Hehn, the Baltic-German writer who wrote of botany and primitive sociology with a grace and delicacy one does not usually associate with German excursions into those subjects. Altogether two volumes which any lover of German literature will be glad to place prominently on his bookshelves.

Americans who have not followed in any detail in their own papers the course of the recent lawsuit in which George Bernard Shaw was made the defendant by an American may be interested in the following discussion from the editorial columns of the *Manchester Guardian:*

It was a curious lawsuit which was ended on Monday in the Chancery Court with a judgment in favor of Mr. George Bernard Shaw. It was concerned with the film version of "The Chocolate Soldier," which is itself an unauthorized "travesty" of Mr. Shaw's "Arms and the Man," and an American film expert had come specially over to this country to plead for a declaration that Mr. Shaw had nothing to do with "The Chocolate Soldier," and that, therefore, a kinematograph version might be made of it without consulting the author of "Arms and the Man." Since Mr. Shaw as defendant has won his case it might be supposed that the opposite proposition was now established—that the author of "Arms and the Man" had in fact some interest in "The Chocolate Soldier," which would be a very curious result from the present case, in which all the evidence went to show that Mr. Shaw knew nothing at all about the light opera which was based on his famous comedy. But that is not really the proposition which is established by the failure of the plaintiff's claim; Mr. Shaw's position in regard to "The Chocolate Soldier" lies exactly as it did before the action; but the plaintiff has failed to get any assurance in advance that Mr. Shaw is not perfectly entitled to bring an action against the filmers of "The Chocolate Soldier" if he considers that his own interests and his copyright in "Arms and the Man" are affected by the Hollywood production. The plaintiff seems to have failed by trying to make too sure of his ground; in his anxiety that Mr. Shaw should not at some later date be plaintiff and he himself defendant he has tried to secure for himself a clearer field than the English law could possibly allow. But the effort has resulted in a superficially perplexing suit, in which most of the evidence was apparently in favor of the plaintiff's point but the judgment goes to the defendant. It seems rather ironical that Mr. Shaw, whose every sentence and argument is clarity itself, should have appeared in the courts over a case which might have been specially invented to puzzle the average reader of the report.

Hauteville House, Guernsey, where Victor Hugo lived during the whole period of his exile from France, has been presented with all its furniture and contents to the city of Paris by its present owners, his granddaughter, Mme. Negroponte, and his great grandchildren, Jean and François Hugo and Mlle. Marguerite Hugo, sons and daughter of the late Georges Hugo. The house is in the same condition as when Victor Hugo left it to return to France after the declaration of the Republic in 1870, and it is estimated to be worth, with its contents, about £20,000. Many of Victor Hugo's most famous works were written at Hauteville House, including "Les Misérables," "La Légende des Siècles," "L'Homme qui Rit," "Les Travailleurs de la Mer," and "Les Chansons des Rues et des Bois."

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ANDRÉ SIEGFRIED has been in the United States half a dozen times. On his last visit in 1925 he toured nearly every State in the Union on behalf of the Musée Social at whose request the present volume has been written. In addition to his academic connection he has, since the armistice, been attached to the French Foreign Office as an economic expert, in which capacity he has taken part in various meetings of the League of Nations and Interallied conferences at Brussels, Barcelona and Genoa.

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The AMEN CORNER

THE outer sanctum is in decorous uproar. No uproar ruled by Pamela, or rising within the sober pale of the Oxford University Press, could be wholly abandoned,—even if Croce's *Autobiography*(1) should sell a hundred thousand copies. But decorous though it may be, the noisy silence is eloquent and fraught with dangerous intensity. For as Pamela, still an ardent internationalist, puts it, an overt act has been committed.

As usual, this overt act centers about Pamela. It was she who presented to the outer sanctum her Latest Victim, Princeton 1923. The Publisher's Young Man, consciously broad minded, welcomed this new rival with seemly but dignified warmth; and even Young Harvard was beginning to overcome a certain injured aloofness. But early this morning the overt act occurred, when the Latest Victim, flaunting the morning Times under Young Harvard's spectacled nose, read therefrom that the Princeton seniors, in their annual vote, have announced that their third favorite woman's college is *Harvard!*

Relations are something worse than strained. Pamela says that Young Harvard is sophomoric, and, like the *Oxford English Dictionary*,(2) makes a paragraph out of a *nuance*. The P. Y. M., openly neutral, secretly feels that the Orange and Black Latest Victim has shown bad taste. Only some exciting event of mutual satisfaction, such as the appearance of *The Legacy of Israel*,(3) can re-unite these estranged Arms of the Service.

THESE sprightly natives of 35 West 32nd Street view with increasing concern the censorship activities of Boston authorities. Will *English Life in the Middle Ages*(4) go the way of Elmer Gantry, because it contains a picture of husband taming? To make matters worse, the Boston Herald urges its readers, beneath the flaunting headline "Get Them Before They Are Banned", to purchase the American Edition of the *Pocket Oxford Dictionary*.(5) And this in spite of the fact that its definitions of the pronoun "it" do not include the modern meaning of "sex appeal." But, as Young Harvard sagely remarks, if we can only get *Modern English Usage*(6) banned, its sales will mount another fifty thousand!

"The world moves slowly to its appointed end" remarked Young Harvard sententiously. "Trite if true, and irrelevant at best" was Pamela's cool rejoinder. "Far from irrelevant, as you would know if you had been blessed with a proper literary education", said Young Harvard taking up his own cudgel. "Just 100 years ago Mr. Pickwick made his famous journey to Rochester,—an anniversary which has not passed without due observance in civilized London. But, alack, here in New York, such events, more important than the vicissitudes of Peaches and Ruth, go all unregarded and forlorn."

"But why make a fuss over Mr. Pickwick?" said Pamela, the ultra-modern, scornfully. "The better to sell our Dickens set, my dear", answered Young Harvard, enjoying his rare triumph.(7)

THE Oxford University Press, which to the delight of the internationally minded Pamela, with increasing frequency gathers literary posies from Continental soil, has just published a book of great international importance. This is *From Bismarck to the World War*,(8) by Erich Brandenburg, Professor of Modern History at Leipzig. Of the German edition the London Times said, "It is the fullest and most complete description of the German policy during the 25 years before the war that has yet appeared." As Pamela remarked sagely upon putting it down, "Nobody wanted the war; nobody started the war; nobody won the war; and we are all to blame!"

In his preface, Herr Brandenburg indicates his point of view: "Any ignoring or minimizing of German faults and frailties was out of the question. I have admitted these so frankly that my compatriots may find such candour unfair . . . (but) . . . the war-like aim of German policy is absolutely unfounded and refuted by every serious study of the official facts. . . . This book has been written, often in anguish of heart, in the belief that it is necessary."

—THE OXONIAN.

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Points of View

Life of Hawthorne

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review:*

SIR:

In his review of Mr. Lloyd Morris's "A Rebellious Puritan: Portrait of Mr. Hawthorne," Mr. Julian Hawthorne makes so many challenges that it is surely someone's business to take him up on some of the points. Indeed his point of view is a challenge to all writers of biographies of famous men. Julian Hawthorne is, as most people are aware, the son of the great author of "The Scarlet Letter," whose life is the subject of Lloyd Morris's book. He it would appear, has a strong objection to have his father treated as a writer, or solely as a writer, and he calls the book in question "a psychical romance." In the same issue of *The Saturday Review* the editorial writer puts a pertinent question: can you judge a man by his books? and, speaking of Lloyd Morris's book, goes on to say, "He makes Hawthorne's books credible, which is certainly an important objective for the biographer of a great man who lives only by his written words." Surely it is not merely an important objective, it is the primary objective of the biographer of a writer to make the writer's books credible. Now Julian Hawthorne happens to believe that his father was a man of action, meant to be a seafarer like his forefathers, but, being inhibited by circumstances, became a writer. Says Julian Hawthorne, "If he hadn't met Sophia Peabody just when he did, he would have thrown his inkstand at the devil and joined the Buccaneers of the Spanish Main. Instead of that, he made honeymoon in the Old Manse, begot children, and wrote 'The Scarlet Letter:' which made a dent, to be sure, and was a blowing-off of steam; but James T. Fields, his publisher, would sometimes refer to him as The Pirate." These sentences seem to me convincing proof that it is Julian Hawthorne, not Lloyd Morris, who is the psychical romancer. Nathaniel Hawthorne was thirty-eight when he married Sophia Peabody. He had, of course, been engaged to her for about four years. But even this allowance brings him to the respectable age of thirty-four before he met her. Now, is it probable that if the Lord had meant any gentleman to take to the Spanish Main he would have waited until the said gentleman's hair was beginning to turn grey? Nor can I agree that the meeting with Sophia Peabody did as much for Hawthorne as Julian Hawthorne or even Lloyd Morris thinks. I quote Julian Hawthorne again, "If he hadn't happened, at a critical juncture, to meet the woman he married, who was stronger than he, he might have become—who knows what! She gave him all he lacked, and much more; and American literature owes her thanks for him."

As a prosy literary critic, may I be permitted to protest against this sort of romantic nonsense — forgivable enough, perhaps, in the son of the subject, but only too frequent in biographical notices in this country. Nathaniel Hawthorne was firmly set on the road to be a writer long before he met Sophie Peabody—so firmly set that it is highly probable that nothing on this earth could have turned him from it. It is true, of course, that he wrote his best work after he married her, but most novelists do their best work after forty, anyhow; the seeds that ripened then were sowed long before he met Sophie, and it is the seed-sowing time that really decides the work of any writer or of any artist. The chief thing to be grateful for about Hawthorne's marriage was that it took place when he was a fully developed man, well on towards middle-life, with an adult mind, and fully developed ideas of life, so that he could not be turned aside from the path he had chosen. I think in all probability that marriage with any other lady who admired his work and whom he happened to meet that year would have turned out as well or even better. Marriage is chiefly an affair of accidents, and when, Hawthorne, after a lonely life, called one evening at the admiring Peabodys, and Sophie came down in a white wrapper and sat on the sofa, it is fairly evident that it was not so much Sophie who attracted his heart as that that heart was looking for an object on which to bestow its affection. Julian Hawthorne informs us that she was stronger than he and gave him all he lacked—a very dubious benefit, indeed. No author with any sense of self-preservation—and most authors over thirty have a great deal—will marry a lady stronger than he is. If he does, and if she gives him all he lacks, there are excellent psychological grounds for believing that he will never write another line.

Julian Hawthorne, in objecting to Lloyd Morris's title declares that only external people addressed the author as "Mr. Hawthorne," but his wife, Sophie, also addressed him as "Mr. Hawthorne" in letters to her own mother, and neither of these ladies could be called external to him. He objects also to Lloyd Morris referring to him as "Nathaniel;" he says he was not called "Nathaniel"—that his friends called him "Natty" or "Nat," his children "Papa." Surely Julian Hawthorne would not wish Mr. Morris to refer to his father as "Natty" or "Nat" throughout this biography! Julian Hawthorne also objects to Lloyd Morris's authorities; he says only two are authentic —his own biography and Horatio Bridges's "Recollections," but he succeeds in throwing some doubt on the value of Bridges. The Memoirs of his sister, Rose, he discounts for a few reasons, the chief of which was that she was only thirteen when her father died. Well, Julian himself was only eighteen when his father died sixty years ago and he had not spent every year of his life with his father. In addition, both Julian and his mother, like most relatives of famous men, added considerably to the difficulties in the way of understanding Hawthorne—Hawthorne's Notebooks, as Mr. Lloyd Morris points out, were edited by his widow, who exercised unlimited liberty in preparing the published text, especially as respects deletion and emendation. Similar liberty was exercised by Julian Hawthorne in editing the correspondence between his father and his mother.

Now, as private individuals, we may sympathize with their reasons for doing these things, but a great man belongs to the nation and not to his family, and there ought to be some sort of legal provision against tampering with his papers; very often his family have an interest in representing one side of his character and concealing another: sometimes they wish to whitewash him, as Mrs. Robert Louis Stevenson did to R. L. S.; sometimes, like Byron's descendants, they wish to blacken him; whatever way you take them, they are not to be trusted as unprejudiced or disinterested biographers; they cannot help having some sort of an axe to grind. Mr. Julian Hawthorne seems to have a disposition to minimize his father as a writer, and to suggest that he only took to writing because he was balked at doing something else—that he was, in fact, a frustrated pirate. Now I can assure Julian Hawthorne that this is the most up-to-date method of biography—to represent a man, not as what he was, but as a frustrated something or other, and if Julian Hawthorne will let us have a biography of Nathaniel Hawthorne as a frustrated pirate he will get a good deal of applause.

"The Professor seems to have missed the point," says Julian Hawthorne. No, he has not. For the most important point about Hawthorne was that he was a great writer, and it is the great writer that Lloyd Morris has presented to us in his remarkable study—a study which is, at the same time, a wonderful narrative. "Hawthorne wasn't a Puritan," says Julian Hawthorne, referring to Lloyd Morris's title, "and therefore could not rebel." Of course he was a Puritan, and, if I mistake not, the greatest writer Puritanism produced since John Milton. He was not what is popularly called Puritanical, but Puritanism was bred in his body and bones, coming to him not only from the loins of his first American ancestor, William Hawthorne, who landed in Salem in 1630, and who was such a relentless gentleman to all and sundry who threatened the Puritan doctrine that he once ordered five Quaker women stripped to the waist, bound to the tails of carts, and lashed by the constable as they were dragged through Salem, Boston, Dedham as an example to sinners. He was a Puritan through Justice John Hathorne, who, with all his posterity, was cursed to the last generation by the alleged witch, Rebecca Nurse. He was a Puritan through timid Joseph who was his great-grandfather, and bold Daniel, the searover who was his grandfather, and Nathaniel, who was his father—they were all Puritans, and, to my mind, by far the most interesting family that Puritanism in America produced. His Puritanism was his glory, and it was his reaction to this inheritance of his that made him a great writer. It is the great writer and the Rebellious Puritan that Mr. Lloyd Morris has presented to us, and we are very grateful to him.

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The New Books

The books listed by title only in the classified list below are noted here as received. Many of them will be reviewed later.

Belles Lettres

THE SCIENCE OF FAIRY TALES. By EDWIN SIDNEY HARTLAND. Stokes. 1927. $2.25.

It is a compliment to any book to be reissued without alteration more than twenty-five years after publication. It is likewise a pleasant sign of our times that an American publisher has felt justified in putting on the market a popular treatise about folk-tales. Mr. Hartland's volume has of course been known ever since it first appeared to all those folk who deign to take an interest in fairy lore—who do not put out of their minds such childish things when they leave the nursery. Until now, however, Americans of this bent have been obliged to buy the book from England. To them it need not be said that "The Science of Fairy Tales" well deserves the compliment of a belated American edition; but to readers who have never encountered the volume it may be well to remark that they will find in it an admirable discussion of story-telling as practised among simple people throughout the world, together with fascinating chapters on such subjects as Fairy Births, and Changelings, and the Lapse of Time in Fairyland.

The book has suffered little loss from the passage of twenty-five years. It is still an able and authoritative discussion by a scholar whose later writings have placed him among the leading anthropologists of his time. One's only regret is that the bibliographical appendix should not have been brought up to date. With a very little trouble it could have been made more useful, for not even the general reader should be expected to limit his browsings to works published before 1890. In the field of popular story a great deal has been brought to light since that date which might interest him very much. Freshening this list of books would have been much better worth while than supplying a negligible introduction by Mr. A. A. Milne.

ROBERT HERRICK: The Last Elizabethan. By LEON MANDEL, II. Chicago: The Argus Press. 1927.

A book that is at once finely made, brief, and readable needs no bush. Mr. Mandel's essay on Herrick has more than its fair share of all three virtues.

The volume sets forth deftly and accurately the known facts of Herrick's life, avoiding with skill that literary geometry which turns a moot point into a speculative system. Its object is less to spin out the facts than to clothe them, "to prevent a once full-blooded person from becoming a myth,"—an object wholly laudable, now that the mythmakers bid fair to leave us few comfortable human figures in all the limbo of letters. The writer's method is to recreate, from literary history, the transshifting times in which Herrick wrote. Across this background he sets in dramatic motion the figure of Herrick himself, drawn from the stuff of his own poems, a Herrick who after a brief and vivid experiment with life in London, sinks into a lazy world of dream and reminiscence and faint regret in far away Dean Prior.

Two passages are of particular interest. One is that which deals with the interaction between amateur and professional writing in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The other is that which accounts, by a neat psychological turn, for the vague and tangled identity of the poet's many dainty mistresses. In both fields Mr. Mandel is breaking new ground. He makes one hope for a fuller development of both in the not too far distant future.

The book itself is a jewel of printing, and will be treasured by those who fancy good book-making.

DEMOSTHENES AND HIS INFLUENCE. By *Charles Darwin Adams*. Longmans, Green. $1.75.
BYWAYS TO CROSSROADS. By *Leolyn Louise Everett*. Brentanos. $1.50.
OUR AMERICA. By *Alice Fay*. Putnams. $1.75.
IRONY. By *J. A. K. Thomson*. Harvard University Press.
EASTWARD HO! By *Chapman, Jonson*, and *Marston*. Edited by Julia Hamlet Harris. Yale University Press.
THE STORY OF ITALIAN LITERATURE. By *Edmund S. Gardner*. Harpers. $1.
A BOOK FOR BOOKMEN. By *John Drinkwater*. Doran. $3 net.
ANTON TCHEKHOV: Literary and Theatrical Reminiscences. By *S. S. Kotelianskiy*. Doran. $5 net.
MOLE PHILOSOPHY AND OTHER ESSAYS. By *Cassius J. Keyser*. Dutton. $3.

Biography

ELEANORA DUSE. By *Arthur Symons*. Duffield. $3.
NANCY LLOYD. By *Anna Lloyd B. Thomas*. Frank-Maurice. $2.
GEORGE ELIOT AND HER TIMES. By *Elizabeth S. Haldane*. Appleton. $3.50.

Drama

AUNT POLLY BASSET'S SINGIN' SKEWL. Compiled by *Elise West Quaife*. French. 75 cents.
KINFOLK OF ROBIN HOOD. By *Percy Mackaye*. French.
ORPHAN AGGIE. By *Harvey O'Higgins* and *Harriet Ford*. French.
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THE BANK ROBBERY. The Plumber. By *Max Ehrmann*. Terre Haute, Ind.: Indiana Publishing Co.
SHAKESPEARE'S HENRY THE EIGHTH. Edited by *Samuel Thurber, Jr.* Allyn & Bacon.
IRIDION. By *Count Zygmund Krasinski*. Oxford University Press. $2.50.
SAINTS IN SUSSEX. By *Sheila Kaye-Smith*. Dutton. $2.50.
DARK PAVILION. By *Lindley Williams Hubbell*. Yale University Press.
THE WOULD-BE GENTLEMAN. By *M. de Molière*. Adapted by F. Anstey. Doran. $1.50 net.

Education

MANUSCRIPT WRITING LESSONS. By *Stone* and *Smalley*. Book II. Scribners. 2 vols, 28 cents and 16 cents.
COMPARATIVE EDUCATION. By *H. W. Foght, I. L. Kandel, A. H. Hope, W. Russell*, and *Peter Sandiford*. Dutton. $3.50.
LES JUMEAUX DE L'HOTEL CORNEILLE. By *Edmond About*. Allyn & Bacon. 80 cents.
LECCIONES ELEMENTALES. By *Medora L. Ray* and *Ruth A. Bahret*. Allyn & Bacon. $1.40.
FIRST COURSE IN THE NEW MATHEMATICS. By *Edward I. Edgerton* and *Perry A. Carpenter*. Allyn & Bacon. $1.
YOUR SCHOOL AND YOU. By *Walton B. Bliss*. Allyn & Bacon. $1.20.

Fiction

HOME, JAMES. By ETHEL KELLEY. Knopf. 1927.

This is a light and slight colloquial romance, the story of a flapper who married a chauffeur, told in the words of each, in her particular patter, in his semi-illiterate method of rumination. This is vulgar New York with a heart-throb, but Jimmie Jakes, the chauffeur, is a thoroughly likable and amusing individual. And Miss Kelley handles her material deftly and tells her little story crisply. At bottom it is a far pleasanter story than "Gentlemen Prefer Blondes," though not nearly so satirical a study, nor are the types so freshly and sophisticatedly seen. Rather, with slight changes in costume and manners, the tale recalls that antique novel of Harry Leon Wilson's, "The Spenders," in its presentation of *nouveau riche* and honest toiler. It is a mere *jeu d'esprit* for Miss Kelley, who, in "Wings," gave us a real novel of memorable quality. But, if innocuous, it is a valid half-hour's entertainment, it is funny,—and it is a wholesome view of crude human nature in terms of burlesque.

THE LAUGHINGEST LADY. By ELINORE COWAN STONE. Appleton. 1927. $2.

A young school teacher, assigned to instruct the children of a copper mining village in the southwest, finds that her little pupils are all Mexicans, distressingly dirty, ignorant, shifty, and dishonest, but withal cute, adorable, and entirely susceptible to improving influence. Fully seven-eighths

(*Continued on next page*)

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The New Books

Fiction

(*Continued from preceding page*)

of the book are taken up with detailing the pranks of these quaint "tots," the remainder serving to unwind the thin thread of a love affair between "Ticher" and a high-handed young man who is the community's leading personage.

UNRESTING YEAR. By ALICE MASSIE. Holt. 1927. $2.

Martha Wilkes, the demure, early Victorian heroine of this somnolent romance is the second born of nine brothers and sisters, offspring of an English middle-class merchant and his shrewish, bigoted wife. At fourteen the girl falls in love with a talented wastrel, the natural son of her grand-uncle, but is parted from the young man for the next six years, during which time he mends his erring ways and begins to prosper. The couple, then reunited, plight their troth secretly, Martha's parents opposing all association with their basely bred kinsman. But Martha protracts too long the period of the engagement, a mistake which permits a treacherous girl friend to supplant her in the fiancé's affections and lead him into wedlock. This is a hard blow for honest Martha, but she weathers it stoically, her unselfish fortitude going not wholly unrewarded. One easily grows fond of Martha, and extremely sorry for her woes, which favorable impressions in no wise relieve the story's prodigious slowness and tedium.

SPELL LAND: The Story of a Sussex Farm. By SHEILA KAYE-SMITH. Dutton. 1927. $2.

The publishers describe this novel as a new book to the American public, although it appeared originally in 1910. They explain that at that time only a few copies were imported from England for the American market. It is the story of an orphan girl who has two boy playmates. When she grows up she finds she loves both. First she marries one who works in a bank. He is unfaithful to her, and she joins the other who works on a farm. By this time, however, disappointment has wrecked this second one and he is unfit to live with. At the end there are two deaths.

To those familiar with the author's canon it will be evident that here is a plot which in one form or another she has subsequently used again and again. "Spell Land," then, has an interest in addition to its own story: it is interesting to see how its plot is handled there in comparison with the way in which it has been handled since. At the early stage when it was written Miss Kaye-Smith already possessed a remarkable maturity; there is a sureness in the conduct of the story and in the approach to cardinal events, there is a freshness and a skill in the handling of the scenes of childhood: these are promises heralding the success which was to come to her later. In the relating of character to event, though, she was in 1910 less successful; it is doubtful, indeed, if she has ever mastered that. "Spell Land" makes one think that perhaps it is not a bad plan for the student of the novel to read a successful novelist's works in the reverse of chronological order.

Let the student read "The George and Crown" and then at an interval "Spell Land." He will thereby discover the radical defect of Miss Kaye-Smith's method; he will see that, consciously or unconsciously, she preconceives the happenings in her stories and then twists the characters of her people to fit. Compare, for instance, the early with the later Claude in "Spell Land." They are not the same person. She is prone, too, to resort to the arbitrary event instead of to character for the shaping of her story: the death of the stallion, e.g., is an appallingly clumsy business. It is on a par with the mushrooms in Miss Parrish's "The Perennial Bachelor."

BILL MYRON. By DEAN FALES. Dutton. 1927. $2.50.

The inexpert parts of "Bill Myron" are so bad that the effective stretches probably seem much better than they actually are. This is the story of a boy's life in a Middle Western city, from the gang-period of the grades to his marriage in the early 'twenties. Throughout, Bill fights and brawls, for pay and for fun; he is usually beaten by his own unwillingness to see when the odds are against him. Although he is an unsavory character we like him, and forgetting that we would not care for him as, say, a fourth at bridge, we are always sympathetic, always on his side. Perhaps that is because of a friendliness for any underdog, perhaps merely because he dares to do some of the things we have only been able to dream of. When he tells eminent citizens—the Y. M. C. A. secretary and the insurance promoter, for instance—precisely what he thinks of them, his rebellion against mealy-mouthed chicanery is rich and racy. Anyone who has ever hated the Y. M. C. A. will howl with glee; those who believe in that institution will have an uncomfortable period of meditation in store for them. In its unorthodox moments and in its sweaty descriptions of prize-fights "Bill Myron" is excellent, but the conventional passages are of negligible worth. The best of Mr. Fales's writing is evidently autobiographical, enabling him to speak his mind for the first time concerning the repressions he suffered in youth; whereas the wretched portions of the book are the obvious result of sitting down, gritting the teeth, and determining to write a novel.

THE MAGIC MAN. By HALLIE ERMINIE RIVES. Dodd, Mead. 1927. $2.

"The Magic Man" is a good hot-weather yarn, neatly constructed and with a few unexpected twists. A wealthy super-Edison, his lovely daughter, a gang of thieves and a criminal resurrected and reformed by the super-Edison are all mixed together in a well-laid plot that supplies the reader with a maximum amount of vicarious action in return for a minimum amount of mental and emotional effort. The improbabilities of the tale, its pseudo-science, its *clichés*, and its wandering clauses with their improper tendency to hug the wrong noun will probably curdle the critical conscience, but then the critical conscience is notably sour anyway.

ROGUES AND VAGABONDS. By COMPTON MACKENZIE. Doran. 1927. $2.

Anyone desirous of writing a typical and successful romance would do well to use this novel as his text. What is more essential to the type than a colorful background? And it is from Italy itself that our author borrows his first heroine. Letizia Oriano is the daughter of a Paduan lady whom the year 1829 finds displaying fireworks in Neptune Park, London. At the first page color, in the form of bursting meteors, Italian profanity, and scarlet pelisses abounds.

Shortly Letizia marries Caleb Fuller; and through this union Mackenzie succeeds in indulging one of our fondest prejudices; for Caleb is a Puritan, *and* stingy, *and* brutal, *and* a hypocrite. His wife grows old in her own room reading French novels; but her wayward spirit (always pleasantly wayward) blossoms forth in her grandson, Bram, who runs away to go on the stage, and eventually to marry Nancy O'Finn.

This pair, with the traveling company to which they belong, constitute the "Rogues and Vagabonds;" nothing really criminal, you may rest assured, just "folks" temporarily decked out in wigs, and smelling not at all badly of grease paint.

With Bram's death, managed according to the best tradition in romantic literature, while he is playing the Clown, Nancy is left to raise her young daughter alone. For many pages we are regaled on the adorably-precocious-child theme, and the poor-but-honest-young-mother *motif*. This combination can lead only to that familiar and grand *finale*, where the daughter, now a sweet-young-woman herself has met with an enormously successful debut on the musical comedy stage; and with equally slight bother, has married the rich and charming Lord Darlington.

BRACKIE THE FOOL. By KLABUND. Translated by HERMAN GEORGE SCHEFFAUER. Putnam. 1927. $2.

We are told in the dedication to Klabund's latest work, that it sprung from the group of legends surrounding one Hans Clauert, Jester of the Mark of Brandenburg, when the latter was still a flourishing branch of the Holy Roman Empire. Besides this source, at least four others are apparent: the Faustus story, the Pied Piper legend, the tale of the Wandering Jew, and particularly sections of that extensive myth having to do with the rogueries of Tyl Eulenspiegel. Similar to the last, Brackie is a saintly knave who goes rollicking down the highway of the world with a mirror held up to its filth and hypocrisies. It is upon the cruel shallowness of the ruling class that the sting of his satire falls most sharply. Yet when fate yields him the life of the Prince-Elector, and his cherished fellows among the common people are given a chance, thereby, to live in peace and decency, Brackie meets his final disillusionment. For the latter prove quite as frail and prone to error as have their own rulers. At the end of the story, we catch a glimpse of the battered idealist, limping hare-like across a snow-swept plain to die of cold at the feet of a talkative scarecrow. To summarize the story in this fashion, however, is to say almost nothing. Its real charm lies in the Gothic detail, the rich and varied decoration. A single reading by no means exhausts the possibility of surprise. We continue to stumble upon new passages of free and rhymed verse, allegory, folk-lore, comedy, satire, and romance, with honey sucked from several mythologies, and occasional gleams of genuine poetry, shining out from the Teutonic welter like casual lightning flashes around the storm-wrapped peaks of the Hartz mountains.

Yet one's enthusiasm for "Brackie the Fool" must be tempered by certain considerations: first of all, the set of ideas here expressed on human nature is as trite as possible. Who is impressed nowadays by so glib and romantic a generality as stated, however gracefully in this passage: "She sent a mysterious smile toward the Italian, a smile that came from the eternal understanding that lies between all women and all vagabonds"? In the second place, the story lacks genuine effectiveness through its highly episodic nature. A collection of glittering anecdotes, "Brackie the Fool" has no more organic plan than an evening's program by the famous Dr. Thurston and like the latter, is shrouded in a mysterious atmosphere, which seems capable of glueing anything together for the Germans.

YOUR CUCKOO SINGS BY KIND. By VALENTINE DOBREE. Knopf. 1927. $2.50.

It is difficult to discuss this novel except in terms of painting. For humbleness of subject matter, and wealth of detail it most resembles an interior by Peter de Hooch or Terborg. The book, however, consists of two pictures, rather than one. The first shows the restrictive, irritating "family life" of the Harrises, realized through its effect on Christina Maynard, a girl of eleven whom circumstances have placed in their charge. As among the "Little Masters," no story is told. A human figure, in this case that of a child, is set quietly at the focal point, with the other elements—material environment, humdrum incident, and the Harrises—grouped around her in careful subordination. They have no existence except to contribute to the greater illumination of Christina's character, although their objective rendition is as exact as a Terborg 'cello. The child, herself, is equally passive, only a part, even though central, of the artist's whole design and at no moment assuming life sufficient to grasp the reins of narrative in her own hands. The first picture, for it is a picture, is of a sensitive plant withered by the cold.

The Deans, to whom Sir William Maynard entrusts the education of his daughter after a particularly unpleasant letter concerning her conduct from Re. and Mrs. Harris, are as wise and sympathetic as the latter have been stupid. Under their care, the better nature of the most incorrigible would blossom forth. And this flower-bearing state, with the circumstances appropriate to it, forms our second *tableau vivant*. Christina is again the center of the design; but gradually, at least one other figure, Mrs. Dean, detaches herself from the background sufficiently to act as a basis for comparison. By this device, and by the radical change of surrounding stimuli, Christina's behavior is clearly displayed in all its phases.

Then the author stops; and we are inclined to exclaim, "What of it?" Just to know that such and such is true about a person is not enough, if our conception is purely static. It could hardly be otherwise, indeed, considering the very slight possibility for movement which the subject matter offers. To treat realistically your typical years from the life of a child in an English rectory, is to preclude the possibility of drama. The present attempt is definitely a word picture, amazingly accurate, informative, and executed in good style; but without direction, and quite impotent to stir our feelings.

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FALLING SEEDS. By ELISABETH COBB CHAPMAN. Doubleday, Page. 1927. $2.50.

Sara Spain, the heroine of "Falling Seeds," joins a rather large sisterhood when she says early in her career, "I don't know what I want, but I want it awful bad." Not until the end of the book does she find out what it is she really wants, and then it is almost too late. Meanwhile she has rebelled in turn against the small Southern town of her birth, against her husband's domineering family, and against the futile suburban society into which she is thrown by her marriage. Meanwhile, too, she has sought anodynes and taken one at least that might well have been labelled "Poison."

"Falling Seeds" is a refreshing first novel by an author who does not dodge the issues she raises. In treating the problem of what happens when a woman who no longer loves her husband meets the man she thinks she has always loved, Mrs. Chapman is not afraid to follow through. She not only asks what a woman would do in the circumstances, but what happens after she does it. Throughout the book the characters stand squarely on their feet and can turn around without showing their leading-strings. And, as was to be expected in a tale by Irvin Cobb's daughter, the author is quite willing on occasion to smile at her heroine. Indeed many a more experienced writer has seen less wisely and less humorously into his own creations.

One feels, however, that this thorough acquaintance with Sara Spain has come to Mrs. Chapman only with the growth of her book. Perhaps Sara took matters into her own hands and changed the sympathies of her author. In any case toward the end there is a shift of emphasis, possibly a shift in point of view, for which the reader is unprepared. Moreover the final chapters, admirable as they are in their sincere effort to solve an unsolvable problem, do not quite come off artistically. They are a bit too hurried for the bigness of the questions involved and might well have furnished the theme for a new novel instead of serving as the conclusion of this one.

However, the book tells an interesting story with a forthrightness and ease in the telling that make it very readable. Its frontal attack on problems that are real and not concocted for the occasion combines pleasantly with its gaiety and competence. The result is a novel that is serious but not too serious, light but not too light.

THE HALF-BREED AND OTHER STORIES. By WALT WHITMAN. Now first collected by THOMAS OLLIVE MABBOTT. Columbia University Press. 1927. $4.50.

One of the "fifty best printed books of the year," this thin volume makes a handsome collector's item. Most of the half dozen tales and sketches are reprints from the extremely rare *Aristidean Magazine* of 1845. The typography is beautiful, and the book is profusely illustrated with woodcuts by Allen Lewis. Thirty copies of a limited edition printed on hand-made paper are illustrated with proof pulled directly from the wood blocks and signed by the artist.

No pains of scholarship have been spared by Dr. Mabbott in his editing of the selections. It is true that these fugitive and forgotten early pieces add little to our knowledge of Whitman the poet. The longest of them, an Indian tale of sixteen thousand words, does show, however, how much Whitman had improved his handling of melodramatic themes since his bizarre "Franklin Evans" in 1842. Moreover, the selections, taken together, reveal still more clearly than we had before known that the themes and the style he affected were in strict conformity with the fashion of the day. His sentimental interest in the Indian, in the Bible narratives, in the abolition of capital punishment, in children, and in exhibitions of personal heroism is made in these hundred pages of his early prose.

ALLAN AND THE ICE-GODS. By *H. Rider Haggard*. Doubleday, Page. $2 net.

THE FINANCIER. By *Theodore Dreiser*. Boni & Liveright. $3.

THE MAN WITH THE YELLOW EYES. By *Bertram Atkey*. Dial.

THE MULTITUDE. By *William Garrett*. Appleton. $2.

INNOCENTS ALOFT. By *Henry Justin Smith*. Covici. $2.

TWO STOLEN IDOLS. By *Frank L. Packard*. Doran. $2 net.

THE HOUND-TUNER OF CALLAWAY. By *Raymond Weeks*. Columbia University Press. $2.50.

BOLD BENDIGO. By *Paul Herring*. Lippincott. $2.

SARDONIC TALES. By *Villiers de l'Isle-Adam*. Knopf. $3.

WHOOPS, DEARIE! By *Peter Arno*. Simon & Schuster. $1.75.

THE RAT. By *Phyllis Bottome*. Doran. $2 net.

THE THIRD MESSENGER. By *Patrick Wynnton*. Doran. $2 net.

STREET OF THE MALCONTENTS. By *Cyril Hume*. Doran. $2.50 net.

ROWFOREST. By *Anthony Pryde*. Dodd, Mead. $2.

BUT YESTERDAY. By *Maud Diver*. Dodd, Mead. $2.50.

WAPSIPINICON TALES. By *Jay G. Sigmund*. Cedar Rapids, Ia.: Prairie Publishing Co.

THE TAVERN KNIGHT. By *Rafael Sabatini*. Houghton Mifflin.

THE ARISTOCRAT. By *Martin Mills*. Bobbs-Merrill. $2.

PILGRIM. By *Ethel Mannin*. Doran. $2.50 net.

BEADS OF SILENCE. By *Lillian Bamburg*. Dutton.

THE BRETHREN OF THE AXE. By *John Somers*. Dutton.

THE SERPENT HEADED STICK. By *John Hawk*. $2 net.

TWILIGHT SLEEP. By *Edith Wharton*. Appleton. $2.50.

WE LIVE BUT ONCE. By *Rupert Hughes*. Harpers. $2.

THE TALK OF THE TOWN. By *Lynn* and *Lois Montross*. Harpers. $2.

Juvenile

THE PLAYBOOK OF TROY. By SUSAN MERIWEATHER. Harpers. 1927. $2.

This is the first of a new series of books for children which develop what seems to us a good idea. The playbook series will, in simple language, open before the child the great stories of history and the myths and epics of peoples. The text of Miss Meriweather first presents the tale and the illustrations by Esther Peck, in the form of colored cutouts, make possible the playing out of the events described against a background supplied by the inside of the detachable covers, representing the scene of the story.

This first book deals with the tale of the Trojan War. Subsequent ones, now in preparation, will deal with ancient Greece and Rome, with Columbus, Washington and Lincoln, and with Robin Hood, King Arthur, and Shakespeare.

THE RELIEF PITCHER. By RALPH HENRY BARBOUR. Appleton. $1.75.

Barbour's athletic stories for boys are always in steady demand by the youth of the country. Mr. Barbour can tell a school story with gusto and plenty of lively incident and his boy dialogue is adept. "The Relief Pitcher" is, naturally, a baseball tale, and a tale of school life today as exemplified in our large prep schools. What more need be said, save that Mr. Barbour's hand, even after penning an almost interminable series of stories for boys, has not lost a whit of its cunning in concocting them agreeably. Ever since his Harvard yarn, "The Arrival of Jimpson," he has excelled at tales of school and college, of camping and of out-door life.

Miscellaneous

THERE'S NOT A BATHING SUIT IN RUSSIA. By WILL ROGERS. A. & C. Boni. 1927. $1.75.

This particular reviewer does not find Will Rogers very funny in print, at least not in this particular volume. We have listened to Will Rogers on the stage as he twirled his rope and drawled his pungent comment on topics of the time. That seemed to us a great deal better. One did not expect actual brilliance or profundity; one was there to be amused; the figure of the man himself, his face, his voice, his mannerisms contributed to the effectiveness of spontaneous "wise cracks" racy of the soil. But the Will Rogers of the printed page, the Artemus Ward of our twentieth century, makes us laugh only very occasionally, and the conviction grows that one could be even funnier about Russia and, at the same time, tell us a good deal more. Rogers has been praised for his "horse sense" as well as for his humor. But compared, for instance, with Don Marquis he is not much of anywhere—in print and in this particular volume. He is decidedly a likable fellow but to us he is disappointing to read. He seems to us to fall between two stools, between humor and philosophy. The spontaneous, off-hand, casual remark on the stage, managed by one with a gift for clowning usually turns out to be nothing in particular when repeated in print, though it may have made you roll into the aisle when you heard it. There is an art of burlesque on the stage that simply can't be put successfully between book-covers. And that, to us, is just what is the matter with this book.

(*Continued on next page*)

"A fascinating account."—*Liverpool Post.*

LISZT, WAGNER AND THE PRINCESS

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ought to bring a wicked sort of joy to anyone who isn't especially reverent."—*N. Y. Evening Post.*

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The New Books

Miscellaneous

(*Continued from preceding page*)

FAMOUS TRIALS OF HISTORY. By the Rt. Honourable the Earl of Birkenhead. Doran. 1926. $4.

FAMOUS CRIMINALS AND THEIR TRIALS. Intimate revelations compiled from the papers of Sir Richard Muir. By Sidney Theodore Felstead. Edited by Lady Muir. Doran. 1927. $5.

When Lord Birkenhead is discussing old, far-off forgotten things he is very good indeed. His account of Colonel Blood who stole the King's Crown, but was overawed by the sight of King Charles in swimming; his story of how Spencer Cowper, grandfather of the poet, defended himself on the charge of murder; and his narrative of the favorite old mystery of Sir Edmundbury Godfrey—to take three examples only—make pleasant little histories to read.

But when he comes down to his own times, and the trials in which he appeared in person, he is rather disappointing. He helped prosecute Sir Roger Casement; he successfully defended Ethel Le Neve, with whom Dr. Crippen eloped; and he sent to prison the curious group who tried to murder Mr. Lloyd-George. Here, where you expect something excellent, the author's lawyer-like discretion makes him a little brief, a little vague. Almost anybody could have told as much. The fact that he was once England's Lord Chancellor—as Strephon in "Iolanthe" would say—has cramped his style.

Even so, Lord Birkenhead's book is better than the memoirs of the famous Crown prosecutor, Sir Richard Muir, which is published in this country under the more popular title "Famous Criminals and Their Trials." Sir Richard was connected with the trial of almost every famous murderer and important criminal in England for the past twenty years. He measured their necks for the rope. This book about him is not easy to read nor is it of continuous interest. Instead, it is scrappy and confused; the material for a good book rather than the finished work.

BIRTH CONTROL LAWS. By Mary Ware Dennett. New York: Hitchcock. 1926.

This book is recommended to all Americans who labor under the delusion that they live in a free country. It is an exposé of the worst features of Comstockery.

Return to Secret Party Funds. By *Perry Belmont*. Putnams.

The Cooperative Movement in Social Work. By *William J. Norton*. Macmillan. $3.50.

How You Can Keep Happy. By *William S. Sadler*. Chicago: American Health Book Concern.

The De Imperatorum et Pontificum Potestate of William of Ockham. Edited by *C. Kenneth Brampton*. Oxford University Press. $2.50.

The Pageant of Civilization. By *F. B. Warren*. Century.

Covering Washington. By *J. F. Essary*. Houghton Mifflin. $3.

Where Is Civilization Going? By *Scott Nearing*. Vanguard Press. 50 cents.

The Story of Civil Liberty in the United States. By *Leon Whipple*. Vanguard Press. 50 cents.

Certain Samaritans. By *Esther Pohl Lovejoy*. Macmillan. $3.50.

Nurses and Nursing. By *Alfred Worcester*. Harvard University Press. $2.

Swimming Scientifically Taught. By *Frank Eugen Dalton*. Funk & Wagnalls. $1.75.

Some Account of the Oxford University Press. Oxford University Press. $1.75.

The Rural Industries of England and Wales. III. By *Helen E. Fitzrandolph* and *M. Doriel Hay*. Oxford University Press. $1.75.

Minutes and Accounts of the Corporation of Stratford-upon-Avon. Oxford University Press. $11.75.

Pamphlets

The Spirit of Israel. By *Oscar Levy*.

The Essentials of French Syntax. By *C. J. M. Odie*. Oxford University Press. 40 cents.

The Robinson Locke Dramatic Collection in the New York Public Library. New York Public Library.

Editions of Beaumarchais in New York City. By *Harriet Dorothea Macpherson*. New York Public Library.

Selenium: A List of References. Compiled by *Marion Foster Doty*. New York Public Library.

The Orlando Gibbons Tercentenary. By *Jeffrey Mark*. New York Public Library.

Early Library Development in New York State. By *George Watson Cole*. New York Public Library.

Henry George and the Single Tax. By *Rollin Alger Sawyer*. New York Public Library.

The New York Tercentenary. Arranged and described by *Victor Hugo Paltsits*. New York Public Library.

Jewish Life in Oriental Countries. By *Joshua Bloch*. New York Public Library.

Macpherson's Ossian and the Ossianic Controversy. By *George F. Black*. New York Public Library.

Securing Employment for the Handicapped. By *Mary La Dame*. Welfare Council of New York City. 50c.

Les Prophecies de Merlin. By *Lucy Allen Paton*. 2 parts. New York: D. C. Heath & Co.

Poetry

MASS AND OTHER POEMS. By Abe Craddock Edmunds. Brown-Morirson Company. 1927.

This is a tiny book of fragments. For the first and longest poem the author has attempted to bring music to the aid of poetry and to give this combination the advantage of drama, as he states it. But the orchestral directions and the stage directions he uses to do this are devices that fail of producing the effects he intends because they are but superficial adornments of the poems, the content of which is not unusual. Part Two is made up of Miscellaneous Poems, all slight, but an occasional phrase moving. Several of the poems of Camelot and one or two of those entitled "Four Men" may be cited as evidence. To our mind these six lines taken from still another sequence are the poet's best work:

You should be one of whom old women talk
To sleepy children after day has gone:
"Last night I saw her where a twisted tree
Was smoking by the moon . . ."
That is what they'll say
To children at the end of the day.

SELECTED POEMS. By Walter de la Mare. Holt. 1927.

The poems in this volume have been chosen from "The Listeners," "Poems" (1904), "Flora," "Motley," "The Veil," and "Crossings" (a play). Nothing has been included from the volumes intended for children. In a fashion this cheats us, for certain triumphs of the fantastic in these volumes for children promptly recur to us: "Melmillo," "The Isle of Lone," "Off the Ground," a myriad others, as it seems. Here, in "Selected Poems," to be sure, is Mr. de la Mare's marvelous angler who fished up a mermaid, here are "Arabia" and "Alexander" and that deeply tender and vivid fantasy "The Last Coachload;" but there is a sadness sadder than that in "The Children of Stare" in most of the other poems,—sadder because, though Mr. de la Mare always writes as though in half-trance, the outer world is also perceived only too keenly. For evidence we cite "Haunted," "Innocency," the portraits of people, "Forgiveness," "Mrs. Grundy," "Winter Dusk," "Futility," "The Old Men," "In the Dock," "Drugged," "Anatomy," "Not that Way," "Even in the Grave." The burden of one's own individuality is here, the thought of "Death, who, stranger, fairer than any siren turns his head," and this, possibly the deepest meditation the poet has given us:

Rave how thou wilt; unmoved, remote,
That inward presence slumbers not,
Frets out each secret from thy breast,
Gives thee no rally, pause, nor rest,
Scans close thy very thoughts, lest they
Should sap his patient power away,
Answers thy wrath with peace, thy cry
With tenderest taciturnity.

To those who think that objective vision and objective statement alone prove one alive to the world as it is, de la Mare's deep subjective brooding is a quiet but powerful reply. It is the reply indeed of the philosophic temper to the restlessly active. The restlessly active live on the surface of the world, not at its heart. And the poet's observation of natural things, of bird and flower, sun and sea, is delicate and intimate. "Look thy last on all things lovely, every hour" is his rede, this giving his earthly eyes their piercing and poignant insight.

Here also are the old masterpieces, "The Little Salamander," "The Sleeper," "Miss Loo," "The Ghost," "All That's Past," "The Listeners," "An Epitaph," "The Scribe." The essence of his beautiful art is here.

A LITTLE BOOK OF AMERICAN HUMOROUS VERSE. Compiled by T. A. Daly. Philadelphia: David McKay. 1927. $1.50.

The author of Canzoni, "Madrigali," etc., one of the most individual humorous verse-writers in America, excelling in dialect (as well as being a poet of some stature) has here brought together a selection of humorous verse by other hands, beginning with "Yankee Doodle," ascribed to Edward Bangs who flourished at the time of the Revolution, and bringing the work down to date with two inclusions from the less well-known light verse of Elinor Wylie, whose reputation rests upon her serious poetry and fantastic novels. Mr. Daly had originally contemplated a larger and completer anthology. He puts this forward as a mere skeleton of the scheme of the larger one, with a charming preface.

He notes that there is very little American verse "of manufacture earlier than 1800 that could, by any stretch of fancy or fond partisanship, be called even mildly humorous." He gives the reasons for this. Beside Bangs, he includes Benjamin Franklin, Philip Freneau, St. John Honeywood, John Quincy Adams, C. C. Moore, of "A Visit from St. Nicholas," and Joseph Smith, his "Eulogium on Rum."

Thence we trace naturally through Emerson, Willis, Hoffman, Longfellow, Holmes (still our most accomplished), Fields, Saxe, Lowell, Leland, Silas Weir Mitchell, Emily Dickinson, Stedman, Charles Frederick Johnson, and Aldrich. Bret Harte is not forgotten, and Edward Rowland Sill's "The Fool's Prayer" is (we think somewhat doubtfully) included. Both Carryls and Bunner are, of course, sure shots; Bierce, for his brief ironies; O'Reilly, Lanigan and Clarke for their persuasive Irish journalism. 'Gene Field and Riley and Joel Chandler Harris are profoundly native. We have Hovey and Robinson, though the reputations of both are as serious poets; Guiterman, Daly himself, Bert Leston Taylor, F. P. A., Don Marquis, Christopher Morley, and Edwin Meade Robinson of our own day. The volume is pocket size and the range is wide.

Sonnets. By *Amory Hare*. Macmillan. $1.25.

The Oxford Book of French Verse. Chosen by *St. John Lucas*. Oxford University Press. $3.75.

Sonnets to an Imaginary Madonna. By *Vardis Fisher*. Vinal. $1.50.

You That Come After. By *Mary Siegrist*. Vinal.

Moon of the Desert. By *Florence Annette Wing*. Vinal.

The Riverside Book of Verse. Edited by *Robert M. Gay*. Houghton Mifflin.

Songs in the Sun. By *Caroline Hazard*. Houghton Mifflin. $2.25.

Counterpoint for Beginners. By *C. H. Kitson*. Oxford University Press.

Our America. By *Alice Fay*. Putnams.

Dark Winds. By *Marshall Johnson*. Four Seas. $1.50.

The Son of Man. By *John Bernard Kelly*. Doran.

Idylls of the Ghetto. By *S. A. DeWitt*. New York: Rand. $1.50.

The Lone Adventure. By *Stanton A. Coblenz*. Unicorn Press. $2 net.

God's Trombone. By *James Weldon Johnson*. Viking.

Hanover Poems. By *R. A. Lattimore* and *A. K. Laing*. New York: Harold Vinal. $1.50.

The Georgetown Anthology. Edited by *Al. Philip Kane* and *James S. Ruby, Jr.* Dorrance. $2.

Paintrock Road. By *Edwin Ford Piper*. Macmillan. $1.50.

Travel

Llama Land. By *Anthony Dell*. Doran. $10 net.

Along the Rivieras of France and Italy. By *Gordon Howe*. Dutton. $3.50.

Berbers and Blacks. By *David P. Barrows*. Century. $3.

First Crossing of the Polar Sea. By *Roald Amundsen* and *Lincoln Ellsworth*. Doran. $5 net.

Fifty Miles Round Paris. By *Cecilia Hill*. McBride. $2 net.

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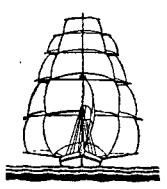

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NOTICE

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are both ready for mailing. There is no charge for copies of these indices and all requests should be addressed to the:

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The Saturday Review of Literature

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The Reader's Guide

Conducted by May Lamberton Becker

Inquiries in regard to the selection of books and questions of like nature should be addressed to Mrs. Becker, c/o *The Saturday Review*.

A BALANCED RATION

Twilight Sleep. By *Edith Wharton* (Appleton).

Covering Washington. By *J. F. Essary* (Houghton Mifflin).

Main Currents in American Thought. By *Vernon L. Parrington* (Harcourt, Brace).

H. B. P., New Jersey, asks if a book has been written giving the living costs in various sections of this country.

He adds: "I am seeking a place where a family of four adults can obtain a greater degree of comfort on a fixed income than can be obtained in this expensive metropolitan area of New York City. Here (in his suburb) rents and property values are high, food more expensive even than in the city, and domestic servants extremely scarce and discouragingly expensive, besides being incompetent. I believe that by relinquishing what are termed the advantages of New York City, the theatres, museums, etc., which to most of us are advantageous only in that they are accessible, one can live more cheaply than can be done here in New York."

I have always known that one could live more cheaply, even in New York, if one never visited the theatres, or those even more expensive resorts, the shops; it would also help to refrain from eating and sleep in the park. Given a determination not to spend money, it may be saved almost anywhere—why, even in this squandering town, I just overheard a prosperous huckster, adjured by a friend to purchase for eighty cents a bottle of medicine to break up a terrific cold, reply "I guess better I don't feel so good, and keep my eighty cents."

But the information for which many others besides H. B. P. are looking is in "The Cost of Living in the United States," a publication of the National Industrial Conference Board, New York, 1926 ($2.50), and in a supplementary fifty-cent pamphlet with the same title, published by them in 1927. The United States Labor Statistics Bureau also publishes statistics in their *Monthly Labor Review*, Washington, D. C.

C. H., Springfield, Ohio, asks for a one-act comedy to be given as part of a high school entertainment in which the faculty also takes part.

Christopher Morley's "Good Theatre" appears in "More One-Act Plays," edited by Helen Louise Cohen (Harcourt, Brace): it seems to me that it would make a perfect number on this or any other program, given an intelligent audience. In the same collection are plays by fifteen authors, including A. A. Milne, John Erskine, Eugene O'Neill, Paul Green, and Robert Frost, who comes out strong in a sardonic New England piece. The notes are especially useful for school productions, and there are suggestions for study in connection with the plays, but these could be given on larger stages.

A longer entertainment with a literary touch, just published here by Samuel French, is the ballad-opera "Mr. Pepys," by Clifford Bax, lately produced at Everyman's Theatre, Hammersmith. The music is not given in the tidy little orange-covered volume, but may be had in separate songs or the complete score; even read, the action is brisk. The catalogue of Samuel French, 25 West Forty-fifth Street, describes so many one-act and longer plays that the school committees will save time by sending for it before they write to me.

D. A. P., Montpelier, Vt., asks for a book of synonyms for a gift to one not a professional writer but sometimes writing for her won satisfaction, who though not always finding the right word at the tip of her pen, is indefatigable in searching for it. It should be a book that "grants to words their full fascination."

The last sentence tempts me to campaign again for Weekley's "Etymological Dictionary" (Dutton), a magical work that—by keeping a rein on my inclinations—I have not mentioned in this column for several months. But though I find more fascination in it than in any other word-finder, I know that this must be a "fairly inexpensive gift," and my pet, the full-grown Weekley not the "concise," couldn't be called that. Besides, such a book as this is rather for those who have "an intelligent curiosity as to the origins and earlier senses" of words, and it delights a purist rather than a journalist.

Why not Fowler's "Dictionary of Modern English Usage" (Oxford)? This is provocative, fascinating, cocksure, and disconcertingly right—disconcerting because it so often reveals that the reader has been wrong. This and the "Pocket Oxford Dictionary" (Oxford), are the only dictionaries I own; it is a wonder that my diction remains so red-white-and-blue. For a book of synonyms, I have received commendations from users of Allen's "Synonyms and Antonyms" (Harpers); Fallows's "Complete Dictionary of Synonyms and Antonyms" (Revell), which is smaller than most of these books; Flemming's "Synonyms, Antonyms, and Associated Words" (Putnam); and Fernald's "English Synonyms and Antonyms" (Funk & Wagnalls); every one of these has been praised to me by someone who has used it, and there is not much difference in price. But I still use, when a word sticks, my old Roget's "Thesaurus" left from long ago, for the new Roget, revised and enlarged in 1925 and published by Longmans, Green, has been borrowed away from me. Anyway, one grows accustomed to the physical aspect of a favorite word-book, and this old one of mine has now taken on a literary quality: it reads like Gertrude Stein in her more conservative moments.

A new book that this inquirer should examine is "Morrow's Word Finder," published by William Morrow and made by Paul D. Hugon. It is a combined dictionary and thesaurus, whose arrangement is so unusual that it must be tried rather than described. One feature that should be mentioned, however, is that it is especially good for poor spellers; as there seem to be more of these every year, this alone should give it a following. You need not know how to spell a word to find it in this book. The type is unusually large and clear, and when I tested it on half-a-dozen words looked up at random, I found that I could get at them rapidly, which is one of the advantages claimed for the book. Of course the time you spend in reading all the other words on the same page does not count; the recreation provided by this is one of the dividends that accrue to dictionary-investors.

R. K. B., (no address), asks for books giving the different kinds of type, including one that sets out the kinds of type used in advertising. He has "Making Type Work" (Century), but now needs something more comprehensive.

Make a good job of it; get the two large volumes of D. B. Updike's "Printing Types: Their History, Forms, and Use" (Harvard University Press). Although I am bound to tell you in advance that it costs fifteen dollars, it is indispensable to an understanding of this subject, and even to the general reader interested in getting a new viewpoint for a survey of civilization, it is a fine investment. The prices of the specimen books of the American Typefounders, Communipaw Avenue, Jersey City, and the Continental Typefounders, 240 West Forty-ninth Street, New York, vary; write to them for information; if you are a printer you get them for nothing.

A. W. E., Pottstown, Pa., and M. R. D., Penn Yan, N. Y., send almost identical requests for a book on gardening, new and authoritative, as a present for a beginner.

"The Flower Garden Day by Day," by Mrs. Francis King (Stokes), I have already suggested in this column; it is a spring publication, but as its name implies, good all the year 'round as a daily guide-book. Mrs. King's authority no one questions. A beautiful new book has just come from Putnam, in the series that includes the "Field Books" of F. S. Mathews and Herbert Durand's "Wild Flowers and Ferns," whose first title was "Taming the Wildings." Mr. Durand has gone further along this line in giving a country-lover good advice on making shy flowers and shrubs grow in captivity; his new book is "My Wild Flower Garden" (Putnam), a model of its kind. The New York Public Library is now holding a continuous garden-book show that makes a magnificent impression; the bulletin of the Forty-second Street Library for this month lists such books.

New May Books from Beacon Hill

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To the Public Interest

William Allen White says "Every American should read HOW EUROPE MADE PEACE WITHOUT AMERICA," Frank H. Simonds' legend smashing history of post-war Europe, $5. . . . Former Ambassador Henry Lane Wilson tells some startling truths about Mexico in DIPLOMATIC EPISODES IN MEXICO, BELGIUM AND CHILE, $4. . . . . Senator Carter Glass reveals the story of the Federal Reserve Act in AN ADVENTURE IN CONSTRUCTIVE FINANCE, $3. . . . General John McAuley Palmer, in a book praised by Chas. E. Hughes, Newton Baker and others, suggests means for peace and self-defense in STATESMANSHIP OR WAR, $2.50.

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For Inquiring Minds

George A. Dorsey, author of "Why We Behave Like Human Beings," presents pictures of Darwin the man as he *really* was in THE EVOLUTION OF CHARLES DARWIN, $2. . . . Cameron Rogers writes brilliantly of a provocative American in COLONEL BOB INGERSOLL, $3. . . . Paul Griswold Howes reveals fascinating secrets of everyday insects and fish near home in BACKYARD EXPLORATION, $6.

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A Great Novel

W. B. Maxwell's BEVAN YORKE—already England's best-seller—is here winning the popularity of his "Spinster of This Parish." It's a profound study of a kindly man in conflict with a narrow world . . . Elisabeth Cobb Chapman's FALLING SEEDS, highly praised by critics, goes into its third large printing . . . a novel of younger married life by Irvin Cobb's daughter, $2.50.

✦

Popular Pictures

The most popular picture book in years is R. V. Culter's THE GAY NINETIES, hilarious drawings portraying the fun and foibles of 30 years ago, $2.50.

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The Phoenix Nest

THIS week we are privileged to print the following contributions to our Ferocious School. It is not a sonnet. But we have, in this particular instance, broken our rule to print nothing but Ferocious Sonnets because we like this poem and because it is entitled, "Remarks Addressed to Mother Nature by a Boy at the Foot of the Class":

The school of life is somewhat odd.
For, though we have abolished God,
Dear Mother Nature, kindly nurse,
Remains with us for bad or worse,
And her first lesson is to teach
The rod to find the infant breech.
We cry at birth, we cry at death,
And, in between, we waste our breath
In such sincere, self-pitying howls
As would move mercy in the bow'ls
Of any Dame less sage or blind.
But if she hears, she does not mind,
Proceeding surely through the years
To give us better cause for tears
And molding by her darling plan
The spanked child to the cudgeled man,
While nice adjustments fit again
Pain to capacity for pain,
Until at last, we can no more
And exit by the recess-door,
With our one lesson scored upon
A slate the newer pupils shun.
"You have been born. You were betrayed.
And now you die. Why were you made?"

A precious Dame! A paltry rule!
Good Lord, I'd rather leave the school
While some rods still remain in pickle
Than wait to feel the final tickle,
The last excruciating twinge
Of life upon the creaky hinge!
If there were hell, I'd rather singe
In any good, commodious hell
Than learn such lessons overwell.

And yet, when one considers all
The bygone scholars, great and small
Rank upon rank of upturned faces
With all their immature disgraces,
The whining Neros, vain and sly,
The dullards with the coward's eye,
Salome and Machiavel
And all the youngest buds of hell
Set to learn their ABCs
When some keeper of the keys
Left them there, with his commands
And then went home to wash his hands—

Then, though the school is somewhat odd
And the one lesson tastes of rod
And my posteriors feel the same,
I have some pity for the Dame.

S. V. B.

And we are still accumulating ferocious sonnets,—we must have another of those sonnet numbers soon. . . .

A special announcement has come to us that *Norman Hapgood* and *Henry Moskowitz* are writing a biography and critical study of Governor Alfred E. Smith to be published in the autumn by Harcourt. It will be entitled "Up from the City Streets: Alfred E. Smith, a Study in Contemporary Politics." Well, to paraphrase a bit of *Henry Mencken's* famous battle cry of the 100 per cent American, with the reverse English,

You Nordics may keep cool with Cal,
This bardic boid is all for Al!

On May twenty-first Harper and Brothers opened with a flourish a bookshop for Boys and Girls at 460 Park Avenue. It will stock the books of all publishers, and will endeavor to coöperate with schools to the fullest extent possible. . . .

The editor of the *Forum* is offering a prize of one hundred dollars for the best translation into English of the poem in the June *Forum* by *M. Paul Claudel*, the new French Ambassador to the United States. All manuscripts must be addressed to the Editor of the *Forum* and submitted before September first. . . .

Captain *John W. Thomason*, author of "Fix Bayonets!" and "Red Pants," who recently returned from Nicaragua where he was in command of the American Marines, is now stationed in Washington on staff duty. He will illustrate a new edition of *Thomas Boyd's* "Through the Wheat" which Scribner's will bring out in the fall. . . .

G. B. Stern has written an account of her wine tour through the homeland of Bordeaux and Burgundy. It is called "Bouquet" and Knopf will bring it out on June seventeenth. We like the remark of her Italian gardener with which Miss Stern begins her book:

I have had so much work to do that I have not had time to get drunk for several weeks, and, signore, my health is suffering from it.

George Jean Nathan's "Land of the Pilgrim's Pride," which Knopf will fire as a big gun of the fall (September) sounds as if it would be a good one. It's about the contemporary American scene, for which Nathan has temporarily deserted the theatre:

Here's to the Nathans, both Bob and George J.
One plays the cello, one ogles the play.

Here's to the Beaches, to Long and to Rex;
One's a beach, and the other's the masculine sex.

Here's to the Cobbs, both to Irvin and Ty,
To the humorist's I and the old batting eye.

Here's to Streets: 42nd and Julian and Main.
They have little in common, and that's very plain.

Here's to ——

No, *sir!* No more of that! . . .

In "George Eliot and Her Times" *Elizabeth Haldane* presents an interesting picture of *George Eliot* and *George Lewes*. "They must have been an odd-looking couple," she writes, "he shaggy, small, and lightly built, padding along like a Skye terrier; she massive in appearance and impressive in manner, he mothering as well as adoring his companion and shielding her from the cold winds of the world so far as was in his power; she grateful for and responsive to every attention given her." . . .

On May 11th *Donald Ogden Stewart* sailed for Scotland to trace down "this rumor about Scotch whiskey of which I've heard so much. I have decided to see whether there is such a thing. I've been sent out by the Authors' and Moving Picture Actors' Protective Association of Southern California to trace it down and bring some samples back." If this doesn't take all of his time, Mr. Stewart is going to write his great humorous novel in Scotland. It is to be called "An American Comedy." . . .

We thank *W. C. Handy* for sending us the sheet music of the "Golden Brown Blues," a lyric by *Langston Hughes* to which Handy has written the music. W. C. Handy is an originator of Blues and a music publisher at 1545 Broadway. . . .

Doubleday, Page have got up a clever fake tabloid to advertise the mystery stories of *Edgar Wallace*. It is bright pink and called *Wallace News*. Its slogan is "Brings MURDERS Home to You." Its Weather Forecast is: Earthquake followed by cyclone; warmer and warmer to last page." Wallace's newest thriller will be "Terror Keep," to appear on July 15th. . . .

Crosby Gaige, we understand, has signed up *Philip Guedalla* to write a play based on the life of Napoleon III as set forth in Guedalla's "The Second Empire." The play will be called "The Painted Emperor," which, incidentally, we think a swell title. . . .

The new American residence of the *F. Scott Fitzgeralds* certainly has a most engaging name. It is Ellersley Mansion, Brandywine Hundred, Delaware; and is a beautiful old eighteenth century house whose lawns run down to the Delaware River. Scott is finishing up a new novel to be published in the fall by Scribners. . . .

Special for children: "The Playbook of Troy," by *Susan Meriwether*, is one of the most delightful inventions we have seen for some time, and only the first of a series. *Archibald Henderson*, biographer of *Bernard Shaw*, says Miss Meriwether has conceived an idea of creative importance. The book combines being a toy theatre and a nursery toy. Its detachable cover becomes a background for the cut-out figures, while at the same time Miss Meriwether's text, charming in itself is reinforced by selections from standard translations of the Iliad and Odyssey. *Esther Peck* has done the drawing under Miss Meriwether's direction. . . .

We have heard of a most beamish incident which recently occurred at Macy's. A sales-person in the Book Department sold a copy of a book by *Christopher Morley*, and, in making out the sales check, forgot to record the title. Subsequently, the check was returned to the sales-person with the query, "Title?" The title was filled in. Again the slip reached the record clerk. "Pleased to Meet You," read the clerk. She became furious and returned the check to the sales-person with the following notation, "Please go to hell!" . . .

Well, well, well, we must now go elsewhere.

THE PHŒNICIAN.

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Two years ago this month we published *Webster's Poker Book*. It was a big book, enlivened by the text of GEORGE ADE, MARC CONNELLY, GEORGE WORTS, FOSTER and others, and contained a trick secret chamber teeming with paper chips, I. O. U. blanks and other accessories. The price was $2.50. We expected it to sell on a vast scale. To date the sale is less than 6,000 copies. That Spring and Summer we used to watch people in the book shops. They'd pick up *Webster's Poker Book*, laugh heartily over it, read it with absorbed attention . . . and walk out of the shop with *The Green Hat*.

We are grateful for the seclusion and safety of *The Inner Sanctum*, which permits us at the rate of 60 cents a line to denounce a destiny that so capriciously deprived *Webster's Poker Book* of the best sellerdom we felt (and still feel) it merited.

Today we are releasing six more of our 25c booklets of poetry. They are: *Witter Bynner, Emily Dickinson, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Four Negro Poets, Edna St. Vincent Millay, and The New York Wits*. In other words, these six Pamphlet Poets may be bought for less than the price of a novel.

Last autumn this 25c series was started with a selection of the poems of *Nathalia Crane, H. D., Edgar Allan Poe, Carl Sandburg, Walt Whitman* and *Elinor Wylie*.

One of the pleasantest tasks of *The Inner Sanctum* has been in dealing with the publishers of these poets' books, and hereby we wish publicly to acknowledge our gratitude to *Albert and Charles Boni, Boni and Liveright, George H. Doran, Harcourt Brace and Company, Harper and Brothers, Alfred A. Knopf, Little, Brown and Company* and *Charles Scribner's Sons*.

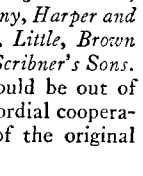
Obviously, the series would be out of the question, but for the cordial cooperation of these publishers of the original books of the poets.

MR. LENZ'S new book, *Lenz on Contract Bridge*, is released today. MR. LENZ has been working on this book since last November, and we are glad he didn't yield to the public clamor of hurry, hurry. The book is absolutely sound, has humor and, best of all, actually teaches the reader the game of *Contract Bridge*.

A diverting episode occurred in the writing of the jacket blurb. The Head of Our Blurb Department figured that Scaring the Customer would be pretty good stuff, and wrote a masterful exposition on How Much Money Can Be Lost If the Game Isn't Completely Understood. Mr. Lenz pointed out that this public encouragement of gambling might be misunderstood by a non-bridge-playing *Polizei*. So the epic was scrapped.

—ESSANDESS

OUR AMERICA



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The World of Rare Books

By Frederick M. Hopkins

MS. OF POE'S "RAVEN"

THE only known autograph manuscript of Edgar Allan Poe's poem, "The Raven," has just been sold by the family of Mrs. Edith D. Whittaker, of Philadelphia, to Thomas F. Madigan, of this city, and George C. Grasberger, of Philadelphia, two dealers who specialize in autographs. The manuscript is written on two double sheets, four pages, 8 by 10 inches, in the poet's most precise and painstaking style. At the right and a little below the signature, "Edgar A. Poe," under the last stanza, are the words, "Inscribed to Dr. S. A. Whittaker," to whom it was presented and in whose family it has been since it was written. Mr. Madigan declined to state the purchase price further than to say that it far exceeded the highest price ever paid for a Poe rarity, referring specifically to a copy of "Tamerlane" sold a year or two ago for $17,500. Except for one stanza of "The Raven" in a letter written by Poe, now in the J. P. Morgan collection, this is the only manuscript of "The Raven," or any part of it, known to be in existence. The original manuscript, which served as printer's copy, was not preserved. The poem was written at a time when Poe was in extreme need and was sold to the editor of the *American Whig Review* for $10. Previous to this acceptance, it had been offered to George A. Graham, a Philadelphia publisher, the poet stating he was in pressing need of money as his wife was starving.

ITALY'S GIFT TO HUNGARY

ON the occasion of the signing of the treaty of friendship between Italy and Hungary a gracious gift was made by the Italian government to the Hungarian government, in the form of two precious manuscripts once owned by the great book lover, collector, and founder of libraries, King Matthias Corvino, of Hungary, 1443-1490. These two manuscripts were the "Commentaries of St. Jerome on the Epistles of St. Paul," and a series of "Homilies of St. John Chrysostom on the Epistles of St. Paul." This royal bibliophile occupies a very important place in early bibliographical history. He collected in his castle of Ofen a splendid library containing more than 2,000 manuscripts, many of them enriched with work of the most famous Italian miniatures. The collection was dispersed, part falling into the hands of Turks and taken to Constantinople, and part scattered through various European countries. Manuscripts from this great collection are to be found in the libraries of Hungary, Austria, Germany, England, France, Spain, Italy, and other countries, and are said to be between 150 and 200 in number.

A UNIQUE BUNYAN

AN apparently unique volume written by John Bunyan has recently come to light. It contains 63 pages and its title and imprint are as follows: "A Discourse of the Building, Nature, Excellency, and Government of the House of God. With Counsels and Directions to the Inhabitants thereof. By John Bunyan of Bedford. Printed and to be sold by George Larkin; at the Two Swans without Bishopgate, 1688." The authority for the claim of uniqueness rests upon the statement in Dr. John Brown's biography of Bunyan, that this work "seems to have dropped out of sight altogether until recent years, when a copy was brought to light through the intervention of Mr. Creasy, bookseller, Sleaford," with a footnote that "This the only copy of the first edition was destroyed with the rest of Mr. Offor's collection." This newly discovered volume was found in a private collection, bound with two other of Bunyan's works of minor importance. It is stated that there is no copy in the British Museum, or in any known Bunyan collection, and that the claim that it is unique appears to be well established.

A DICKENSIAN CELEBRATION

ON May 13, the Dickens Fellowship of London celebrated an event famous in Pickwickian history. A stage coach left the Golden Cross Hotel in the Strand at Charing Cross for Rochester with the Pickwick Club aboard just as it did on May 13, 1827. In the party, carefully arrayed in their proper costumes, were Mr. Pickwick, Mr. Snodgrass, Tracy Tupman, and others. The coach changed horses every twelve miles. At Rochester the club was given a civic welcome. Mr. Pickwick, in blue coat, white breeches, and black gaiters, beamed from the top of the coach, and from good point of vantage, Tracy Tupman could be observed regarding young ladies with extraordinary interest. The celebration was greatly enjoyed by the public who turned out with enthusiasm, and the fellowship felt that the celebration had been handled with scrupulous regard for the details of the event as described by Dickens.

A NEW LINCOLN MANUSCRIPT

A MANUSCRIPT, said to be one of the longest and finest, in Abraham Lincoln's handwriting, has just been discovered in Lincoln, Illinois. It was one of the items relating to President Lincoln left by Col. Robert B. Latham, a friend of the emancipator, and is said to be a clean draft of the famous speech on sectionalism delivered in 1856 during the Fremont and Buchanan campaign. The manuscript is now owned by a son of the late Col. Latham, who was unconscious of its value until a few days ago. As soon as the existence of the manuscript became known, representatives of several well known collectors offered to buy it. But it is now stated that the manuscript will be placed in charge of the American Art Association and will be sold at auction.

NOTE AND COMMENT

THE sculptural memorial to Edgar Allan Poe, which once occupied a prominent place in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and for which a place was found only after a series of unsuccessful efforts, has finally been put on exhibition in the hall of the main building of the City College.

Humphrey Milford announces a type-facsimile of the first edition of Keats's "Endymion," issued in 1818, edited by H. Clement Notcutt, professor of English in the University of Stellenbesch, South Africa. The paper and covers, as well as type, are as close a reproduction of the original as can be made. In his notes Professor Notcutt has indicated the variant readings of later editions, and, in his introduction, seeks to elucidate not only the meaning of the allegory, which lies beneath the surface of the poem, but also the circumstances in Keats's life with which the work is associated.

A new edition—the first reprint for a century—of Godwin's beautiful little memoir of his wife, Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin, will shortly be published as a new volume in the now well known series of "Constable Classics." Special interest attaches to the illustrations; ten are after original drawings by William Blake, only two or three of which have ever been reproduced before. It should also be noted that, in connection with Mary Godwin's life story, are printed the superb series of her love letters to Gilbert Imlay, which, previously published in fragmentary form and at different times, have now been brought together and presented as a complete series.

The Shakespeare Head "Froissart" is announced, reproducing Berners's translation in eight volumes from the first edition printed by Pynson for Henry VIII, in 1523-1525. It will be issued in a limited edition, made direct from a copy in the Grenville Library at the British Museum, with corrections in footnotes of obvious errors, the narrative itself being left as nearly as possible as Berners wrote and Pynson printed it. The text will be illustrated by the arms and devices—more than 600 in number—of princes and knights who figure in the chronicle, drawn by Paul Woodroffe, who is also contributing maps of the kingdoms, duchies, and counties in which Froissart's story is set.

For four years now a member of Rabindranath Tagore's family has edited a review which is designed to serve as a common organ for both the Moslem and the Hindu race. It is entitled the *Visva-Bharati Quarterly*, and is issued under the guidance and inspiration of the poet.

In connection with the Newton centenary, (says the *Manchester Guardian*), it must be a source of pride to every Englishman to know that Newton conformed to the sealed pattern of the Englishman destined to make a great name in the world by an obstinate clinging to the bottom of his class at Grantham School in his early days there. But his reason for emerging from that traditional scholastic obscurity was characteristically original. We are introduced, then, to Newton at the bottom of the lowest class and apparently quite content to stay there. One day, however, the lout next above him kicked him in the stomach on the way into school. Though much the smaller, Newton took the only course open to a lad of spirit, challenged the lout to a fight superintended by the schoolmaster's son, and licked him very thoroughly. But it occurred to him (here is the Newton touch) that a mere physical victory was not enough; he must beat him in school also. He set to work, acquired a love of learning, and never became idle again. Generations of children have heard the story of the apple, but the kick in the stomach and what came of it was really much more important; but for that kick Newton's mother would have had her way and her son would have become a farmer instead of going to Cambridge.

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